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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

VOLUME FIRST.

Freeman Sculp.t

Mr. William Smellie.

From an original Painting in the possession of his Son.

Published Oct.r 1810. by John Anderson Bookseller Edinburgh.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE,

WRITINGS, & CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM SMELLIE,

F. R. S. & F. A. S.

LATE PRINTER IN EDINBURGH,

SECRETARY AND SUPERINTENDANT OF NATURAL HISTORY TO THE SOCIETY OF SCOTISH ANTIQUARIES, &c.

By ROBERT KERR, F. R. S. & F. A. S. Ed.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME FIRST.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR JOHN ANDERSON;

AND

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, & BROWN, LONDON.

Alex. Smellie, Printer.

1811.

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

THE HONOURABLE

HENRY HOME,

OF KAMES AND BLAIR-DRUMMOND,

LORD KAMES,

ONE OF THE SENATORS OF THE COLLEGE OF JUSTICE,

AND

ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF JUSTICIARY IN SCOTLAND:

A most worthy, learned, and upright JUDGE, *an enlightened* PHILOSOPHER, *and a most respectable and intelligent* COUNTRY GENTLEMAN; *with whose friendship* MR SMELLIE *was long honoured, and to whose early and steadily continued patronage, he owed material obligation: These* MEMOIRS *are inscribed as a testimony of indelible gratitude from* ALEXANDER SMELLIE, *to the illustrious friend and benefactor of his father; and as a mark of high respect for his* LORDSHIPS *character and talents,*

by THE AUTHOR.

Rv. NPY R Cohen

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

THE LIFE even of an eminent printer may scarcely appear of sufficient importance for biography, as by many persons his whole time and talents may be considered as occupied in correcting the proof-sheets of the literary productions of other men. But Mr SMELLIE was not only the most learned printer of his day, and the most eminent of his profession in the capital of Scotland; he was likewise an author of no ordinary genius and talent, and contributed not inconsiderably to the extent and celebrity of Scots literature. Besides his own acknowledged original com-

positions and translations, many learned and ingenious Scots authors had the good fortune to have their works critically examined by him in their passage through the press, and the candour to acquiesce in his liberal and judicious corrections. Almost from his boyish days some works of sterling merit, which still hold a distinguished place in public estimation, were materially indebted to his correct taste and critical skill, for improvements in their language, arrangement, and reasoning; and in his more mature years, few works of importance were printed at Edinburgh without having been submitted to his consideration. Of this position a strong confirmation is afforded in the following extract of a letter from a respectable and worthy clergyman of the Church of Scotland, who was several years corrector to the late Mr SMELLIE, and made this communication to his son and successor in June 1810.

"I REMEMBER that, about the year 1771, "a Mr P. WILSON published something in La- "tin about the inequalities observable on the "moons surface; and I perfectly recollect "that this paper passed through Mr SMEL- "LIES hands, and have reason to believe

" that his criticisms were of material use.
" The paper did Mr Wilson much credit;
" and he obtained a premium from some fo-
" reign literary society.

" Mr Smellie was often consulted upon
" literary subjects; and his thorough know-
" ledge of the structure and composition
" of the English language, gained him the
" esteem and friendship of all the learned
" men in and about Edinburgh. The late
" Lord Kames had much confidence in his
" critical acumen, and consulted him upon
" many occasions.

" The first volume of Sir John Dal-
" rymples Memoirs was printed when I
" was about your fathers hands; and I re-
" member well to have heard Sir John ex-
" press his obligations to Mr Smellie; add-
" ing, at the same time, that Principal Ro-
" bertson, David Hume, Dr Blair, and Dr
" Adam Smith, had all read his manuscript,
" but that he had derived ten times more
" advantage from your fathers observations,
" than from all the above conjoined: And
" there was a bond of union formed, that I
" believe was never broken.

"Dr Cullen and Dr Hope, and the late "Professor Robertson, had much literary "intercourse with Mr Smellie. Indeed all "the literary people in and about town, while "I was with him, were his daily companions. "I used sometimes to think he had too many "associates of that description; for it threw "too great a load of the business of the house "on my shoulders."

A great proportion of this biographical work will necessarily consist of anecdotes relative to the literature of Scotland; in which Mr Smellie held either a direct connexion as an author, a translator, or a compiler, of distinguished eminence; or as conjoined with others in what may be called copartnership literary speculations and adventures; or indirectly, in the way already indicated, as aiding, by his judicious and almost instinctive critical skill, to ameliorate the style, language, and arrangement, and even the reasonings of other writers. Of all these, so far as warranted by authentic documents, an ample and impartial account will be given in this work: Yet, in detailing the last of these departments of his literary labours, prudent delicacy in regard to the feelings of

others has induced the suppression of many prominent circumstances, which could have been sufficiently authenticated by unques tionable evidence.

Mr Smellie repeatedly expressed to his eldest son, the present Mr Alexander Smellie, his intention of drawing up an account of his own life and writings. From his acknowledged candour and well known abilities, this must surely have proved an interesting and instructive work ; as it would unquestionably have contained numerous and authentic anecdotes of the many learned and respectable men with whom he was acquainted and connected. Considering the frequent advertence to this subject in the light of a testamentary wish, his son and successor has always been anxious to have this intention supplied, by the publication of a life of his honoured father. To his earnest representations the present attempt owes its origin ; and by the partiality of his friendship, the author has been induced to undertake the task ; for the performance of which, the younger Mr Smellie placed a vast mass of papers in his hands, by means

of which this work has been selected, arranged, and compiled with much care.

In confirmation of the authenticity of the materials employed in the composition of this work, the author received along with these materials the following letter from his friend Mr Alexander Smellie, Printer in Edinburgh, and Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland; who has likewise been consulted on a great number of circumstances in the course of its composition, and has deliberately and often examined and compared every part of it, both in manuscript and while passing through the press.

To Mr Robert Kerr.

" Dear Sir, *Edinburgh, March* 17. 1810.

" In consequence of the conversation I had " with you some time ago, I have drawn up " some facts and circumstances respecting " the life of my father. From a carelessness " which he had about every thing he wrote, " the materials I send you are unfortunate- " ly much interrupted. This has often been

" the cause of regret to me, as a full
" account of his life, writings, and corre-
" spondence, would have furnished a com-
" plete history of the literature of Scotland
" during his time. Besides his intimacy
" with almost every eminent literary charac-
" ter of this country during that period, it is
" perfectly well known that many publications
" of great merit were considerably improved
" by him, not merely as a servile corrector
" of the press, but by critical revisal, and ma-
" terial amendment of language, argument,
" and arrangement.

" Some books of great interest were in
" reality all written over again by him, and
" others were very materially altered by his
" hand, or pursuant to his suggestions. One
" book on *Medicine* of almost unexampled sale,
" and which has gone through a vast number
" of editions, was entirely re-written by him
" before going to press. For a considerable
" period, no less than six thousand copies
" of that book were sold yearly. Many
" other works were revised and amended by
" him, of which you will find ample proofs in
" the facts and correspondence with which I
' now furnish you, and which I have set down

" and copied, for your use, just as they oc-
" curred, without any regard to arrangement.

"BESIDES the letters and other papers which
" I transmit for your assistance, I regret ex-
" ceedingly to say, that I saw a vast mass of
" curious letters burnt, which had passed be-
" tween my father and Lord KAMES, Lord
" HAILES, Lord ELIBANK, DAVID HUME, Dr
" GILBERT STEWART, the Count de BUFFON,
" Dr BLACKLOCK, ROBERT BURNS, and many
" other eminent men. This happened when
" my father was assorting some papers in an
" old desk, not long before his death; and I
" was then too young to be fully aware of their
" value, or to be anxious to rescue them
" from destruction; although I have often
" perused many of them. I send you what
" remains; and, as many of the originals
" are decayed and torn, I have transcrib-
" ed most of them for your more ready
" use. You may absolutely depend upon
" the authenticity and accuracy of the whole
" materials; and I leave to your prudence
" and discretion to suppress whatever you
" may deem improper for publication. I
" am, &c.

" ALEX. SMELLIE."

Since writing the foregoing letter, Mr Alexander Smellie has recovered a very considerable mass of additional materials, principally consisting of letters which had passed between his father and many respectable characters of his time; all of which have been likewise used in drawing up these Memoirs. Owing to the nature of many of Mr Smellies letters, often copies without dates, and many of the originals having no date of the years in which they were written, the arrangement of this work has necessarily become more defective in regard to chronological order than was to have been desired. Many of these documents, likewise, either want dockets of the persons names to whom they were addressed, or are only uncertainly indicated by initial letters; and even a good many of the originals are unsigned. This has occasioned a defect in some places, which could only have been supplied conjecturally, but which motives of delicacy have prevented the indulgence of, lest the feelings of worthy persons might suffer injury.

It might reasonably be expected, that a full account of the life, writings, and corres-

pondence of Mr Smellie, would comprise the literary history of the capital of Scotland, from about the year 1760, when he first began to take an active share in the literature of his country, to the year 1795, in which he died. It unfortunately happens, however, that materials for executing so complete a history of Scots literature, as connected with the life of Mr Smellie, are not now to be procured. From the circumstances already mentioned, the documents upon which this work are founded are much interrupted: Yet such as these are, and it has been an invariable rule to advance nothing in these Memoirs without authentic evidence, it is hoped that the following pages may be found not altogether unworthy of the persons and circumstances they are intended to commemorate, and to contain a considerable assemblage of interesting, curious, and instructive information.

The whole original documents on which the following Work is founded, shall be arranged in a large volume, and deposited in the library of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, as memorials of its authenticity. Every other paper, which has been deemed

improper for insertion, is carefully destroyed; because the son and the biographer of Mr SMELLIE are quite unambitious of gratifying the cravings of improper curiosity by the sacrifice of private feelings.

OF the composition of this Work, it becomes not the author to speak; except that he has anxiously endeavoured to follow, *haud passibus aequis*, some modern celebrated publications of a similar nature, yet without presuming to any pretensions of having attained to equality, far less to rivalry, with such excellent models of biographical composition: He hopes, however, to have succeeded in erecting a not entirely inadequate monument to the memory of a regretted literary friend, and so far to have fulfilled the wishes of a living friend whom he much respects.

WILLIAM SMELLIE, late printer in Edinburgh, was born in the Pleasance, one of the suburbs of the city of Edinburgh. The precise date of his birth cannot now be ascer-

tained, either from the parish records of the time having been incorrectly kept, or because his father may have omitted to direct the registration, as he was a dissenter from the established church: But his eldest son distinctly remembers to have heard his father mention, that he was born in 1740; a year the most remarkable of any in the recollection of the oldest persons now alive in Scotland for an extraordinary dearth, almost amounting to famine.

Mr Smellie was the youngest son of Alexander Smellie, an eminent architect or master-builder and stone mason of Edinburgh; who appears to have been esteemed and respected among his brethren of the same profession, as he served the office of Deacon of the Masons in the united incorporations of Marys Chapel. For the information of English readers, it may be necessary to explain, that the office of Deacon of an Incorporation in Edinburgh, is almost precisely similar with that of Master of a Company in the city of London: With this difference, however, that all the fourteen deacons of trades in Edinburgh are constituent members of the common council of that

city. This council, including the Lord Provost and other Magistrates, consists in all of thirty-three members ; by whom all the public concerns of the city are managed, and to whom the election of the successive magistrates and members of the town-council, and of the representative in Parliament, exclusively belongs.

His grandfather, William Smellie, was of the same profession, and was also in his day Deacon or Master of his trade or company. He likewise was of a religious disposition, and was one of the elders of the Tolbooth church of Edinburgh ; a species of lay assistants to the parish ministers in the church of Scotland, who still assist in the dispensation of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and constitute with the minister a species of ecclesiastical court for superintending the morals of the parishioners, and for taking care of the parish poor. In those days the elders likewise assisted the ministers in visiting and praying with the sick, and in parochial examinations.

About the commencement of the eighteenth century, it is said there were only three mas-

ter masons in Edinburgh of such note as to be denominated architects. One of these was Mr Milne, the descendant of the architect who built the sumptuous and elegant palace of Holyroodhouse, and the ancestor of him who devised and executed Blackfriars bridge, which the late illustrious Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, Mr John Robison, used to distinguish as the most scientifically perfect in its contrivance and execution of any existing in the world. The second was Mr Adam, the father of the celebrated architect Mr Robert Adam, who built the Adelphi and many magnificent edifices, and the grandfather of the present William Adam, Esq. of Blair-Adam in Kinross-shire, a learned and eloquent English counsellor, and member of Parliament. Mr William Smellie, the grandfather of the object of these Memoirs, was the third of these eminent Edinburgh builders.

John Smellie, the older and only brother of our Printer, was likewise bred a mason; but seems never to have risen to any eminence or celebrity in his profession, and left no family behind him. Indeed it would

rather appear that he had been of a thoughtless and idle disposition; as his brother William was frequently under the necessity of giving him pecuniary assistance.

Though bred to a mechanical profession, on the traditionary authority of the family, handed down by his son William to the present Mr Alexander Smellie his grandson, Mr Alexander Smellie is stated to have been an excellent classical scholar. He was even a Latin poet of no contemptible talents; and some of his productions in that line still remain. The Latin poem which his son, Mr William Smellie, considered as possessing the greatest merit, he used almost constantly to carry about with him in his waistcoat pocket; and frequently exhibited it with much honest exultation among his literary companions, as the composition of his father a stone mason, good humouredly challenging the best classical scholar among them to enter into fair competition. By frequent use it was at length worn to tatters, and became quite illegible.

On the same authority, we are informed, that Mr Alexander Smellie was a

very religious member of that sect of Presbyterians which is termed Cameronians; who had strenuously adhered to the Presbyterian form and doctrines under the most trying circumstances, and to the Solemn League and Covenant after the Restoration; and of whom, since the Revolution, a small remnant still retains strongly rooted opinions and prejudices, long after the cause of separation from the established church of Scotland has entirely ceased to operate. Mr Smellie used to mention to his family, that his father frequently carried him when very young to hear sermons on the Pentland hills, a mountain range a few miles south from Edinburgh. The Cameronians had been originally constrained to adopt this practice, as their meetings for social worship were interdicted during the religious persecutions in the reigns of Charles II. and James VII. and they long persisted in the same custom, from which they have often been called Mountaineers, down almost to the present times, either from habit, or in commemoration of the sufferings of their ancestors.

There is a sepulchral monument in the Greyfriars church-yard of Edinburgh, commonly denominated the Martyrs Tomb,

which was erected after the Revolution by the Cameronians, to the memory of those of their brethren who fell in the battles of Pentland and Bothwell-bridge, in opposition to the persecuting measures of Charles II. for dragooning the Scots Presbyterians into an acquiescence with the Episcopal form of church worship and government, which they heartily abhorred. This tomb is supposed to have been originally built by Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE, the father of our Printer, or by his grandfather WILLIAM SMELLIE; and Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE and several of the elder branches of the family are there interred.

OWING to some extreme religious prejudice which he had imbibed from the principles or notions of that sect to which he belonged, ALEXANDER SMELLIE refused to serve heir to his brother, who was proprietor of a considerable portion of St Leonard's Hill, now a valuable property in the immediate vicinity of Edinburgh; in consequence of which that property was irrecoverably lost to his family. About the year 1780, his son WILLIAM drew up a memorial on this subject, for the consideration of the late learned Scots counsellor, Mr ALEXANDER WIGHT,

author of a much esteemed Treatise on the Law of Elections for Members of Parliament from this part of the united kingdom, with whom Mr SMELLIE lived in habits of friendly intercourse. Mr WIGHT gave a decided opinion, that it was then impossible to recover possession of the property, owing to lapse or legal prescription; and in this advice, however reluctantly, Mr SMELLIE prudently acquiesced.

OUR WILLIAM SMELLIE received the first rudiments of his education in reading and writing at a school in the village of Duddingstone, about a mile from his paternal residence in the Pleasance; and, though destined like his father to follow a mechanic or handicraft profession, he had the advantage of being initiated early into the preliminaries of a learned education, by going through a regular course of classical study at a grammar school; a practice long universal, and still much pursued, among the sons of almost every respectable citizen or inhabitant of Edinburgh; where an excellent public Latin school instituted, as well as the University, by James VI. has existed for many years under a succession of able masters, and

at which very moderate fees are exacted. This school contains four ordinary masters and a rector, all of whom teach in separate rooms. Each set of scholars continues during four years under the tuition of one of the ordinary masters; and in the usual course remains two years at the upper class or highest form which is taught by the rector, who usually examines one of the other classes once every week in succession. During the two or three latter years of the course, besides being gradually advanced into the higher Latin classics, the boys go through a regular series of instruction in Roman antiquities, are taught comparative ancient and modern geography, and are initiated into the principles of the Greek language. It must not, however, be omitted, that this admirable system of the institutes of classical learning owes its present state of perfection to the unwearied diligence of the late most worthy, learned, and industrious Dr Alexander Adam, who was rector of this *High* School from 1771 to 1810; and to whom our ingenious youth and their teachers are indebted for several excellent fundamental books of education; particularly a Grammar and Dictionary of the Latin language, a System

of Roman Antiquities, an Epitomy of Ancient and Modern Geography, and an Abridgement of Classical Biography.

In 1752, William Smellie was taken by his father, when about twelve years of age, to the shop of a stay-maker, then a remarkably well employed trade, for the purpose of binding him an apprentice; but fortunately, as will appear in the sequel, both for his own literary fame and the interest of Scots literature, his father and the stay-maker differed upon the proposed terms; and the young scholar was preserved from the mortifying drudgery of scraping whalebone, and stitching coats of armour to force the female form into every shape save that of natural elegance. This plan for his establishment in life being abandoned, he was bound an apprentice for six years and a half, on the 1st of October 1752, to Messrs Hamilton, Balfour, & Neil, printers in Edinburgh, being then about twelve years of age.

At that period, and for a considerable time afterwards, it seems to have been very common for the eminent Edinburgh booksellers to be concerned likewise in the printing busi-

ness. Messrs Hamilton & Balfour were eminent booksellers and copartners, and likewise carried on the manufacture of paper at Bogsmill, in the neighbourhood of Collington, on the Leith water, a few miles from Edinburgh. After some time their partnership was broken up, and the two concerns separated. Mr Hamilton became the sole proprietor of the paper-mill, and was afterwards succeeded in that business by his sons. Mr Balfour continued the bookselling business for many years with great spirit and success; and afterwards purchased the paper-mill from the family of his former partner Mr Hamilton, which business is still carried on to considerable extent by his sons; but the bookselling business was lately abandoned. At the time when Mr Smellie was bound apprentice to the printing business, Mr Patrick Neil was the active partner in the printing concern, which is still carried on by his surviving brother Adam, his only son James, and Patrick, the son of the present head of the house, Mr Adam Neil. Mr Patrick Neil, the junior partner of this old and respectable house, is a young man of learning and ingenuity, and has published a well written account of a Tour made

by him through some of the Orkney and Shetland islands in 1804; originally printed in several successive numbers of the Scots Magazine for 1804 and 1805, and reprinted with corrections and an appendix, in a separate volume, in 1806. Though chiefly intended to illustrate the natural history of these islands, this work contains much valuable information on a variety of other interesting topics, and does much credit to its author.

The former custom, of booksellers entering into leading partnerships with printers, has of late years been almost entirely discontinued; and, in the present day, the printers in Edinburgh depend very materially for a valuable portion of their business on the practitioners in the law, as a very large proportion of the arguments of counsel in lawsuits before the Court of Session, or Supreme Court of Scots Civil Jurisprudence, is printed and distributed to the Judges, by which means they are enabled to study the cases deliberately at home, instead of trusting to their memories or notes for the pleadings on either side. It is said that this practice of written or printed pleadings, or arguments

in Scots law proceedings, originated during the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell, who supplied the Scots bench with English judges. The spoken language of Scotland at that period, even among men of education, seems to have been considerably more dissimilar to English than it now is, as the English judges were utterly unable to comprehend the language used in argument before them at the Scots bar; and gave orders, therefore, that the arguments on both sides should be printed for their deliberate consideration; and the practice has been continued ever since. It is said that there are every year printed at Edinburgh for this sole purpose, 90,000 full quarto pages, equal to 150 well-sized quarto volumes. What adds very considerably to this voluminous mass of printed law is, that, instead of witnesses being examined *viva voce* before the Court, their depositions are taken down separately by commissioners especially appointed for the purpose, and are all printed before they are submitted to the consideration of the Judges: And, besides, all written documents founded upon as evidence, or adminicles of proof, on both sides, are likewise printed.

Even within memory, some of the best educated Scots men, and gentlemen of most respectable rank, continued to use the unadulterated *broad* Scots dialect. The late Robert Macqueen of Braxfield, an eminent lawyer and judge, and Lord Justice-Clerk, or chief Judge of the Supreme Criminal Court, and the late pious, learned, and eloquent minister of the gospel, Dr John Erskine, both rigidly adhered to this dialect in all their public appearances. In the present day, however, young gentlemen, who are studying for the pulpit and the bar, uniformly make English elocution a part of their education; and the language of Scots people of family and education is fast assimilating to that of England.

From similar circumstances with those already mentioned, in respect to the date of Mr Smellies birth, it has not been possible to discover the name of his mother, who died when he was extremely young, as we learn from a letter in his correspondence with one of the early friends of his youth, which will be found in an after part of these Memoirs. He likewise soon lost his respectable father, who left him no inheritance, saving the exemplary memorial of a well spent, religious,

and strictly moral life, and the inestimable advantage of a good fundamental education. Besides WILLIAM, who was his youngest son, ALEXANDER SMELLIE left one other son and three daughters. JOHN, the oldest son, was bred to the profession of a mason, and married AGNES FERRIER, sister to the present JAMES FERRIER, Esq. Clerk of Session, and grand-daughter of Sir WILLIAM HAMILTON, Bart. of Westport, near Linlithgow. ANNE, the eldest daughter, married a Mr MABON, shipmaster belonging to the port of Leith. HELEN, the second daughter, died unmarried. ELIZABETH, the youngest, married a Mr DUFF, merchant in London. Such is the account of this family as recollected by Mr SMELLIES widow.

DURING his apprenticeship, the exemplary diligence and regular conduct of our young printer, and his early indication of superior intelligence, may be appreciated by the following extracts from two recent letters to his son, Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE. Dr ROBERT HAMILTON, Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen, the son of one of his masters, writes thus. "Your father was considered as a capital and steady

compositor, and was employed in every work that required particular accuracy." On the same subject, the worthy, respectable, and Reverend Dr Samuel Charters, minister of the parish of Wilton near Hawick, in the county of Roxburgh, who was an early and long-continued friend of Mr Smellie, writes as follows. "When I resided with your father, his manner of living was uniform and regular. He was constantly employed in the printing-office during the day, and occupied all his evenings in study or in literary pursuits."

The estimation in which his conduct and abilities were held by his masters may easily be judged of from this circumstance; that, two years before the expiration of his apprenticeship, they appointed him to the important employment of corrector of their press, with a weekly allowance of ten shillings. This certainly was a large salary in those days, for a young man in the situation of an apprentice, and to whom they were only bound by the indentures to pay three shillings a week; and the circumstance reflects honour both on the masters and their youthful corrector of the press; on the former, for their

liberality and discernment; on the latter, for his abilities and meritorious conduct.—The comparatively equivalent wages between 1756 or 1757, when this arrangement took place, and the present year 1810, at the distance of rather more than half a century, cannot be now satisfactorily ascertained; but from an attentive consideration of the change in the prices of every necessary of life since that time, ten shillings would then have procured as much essential comfort and accommodation in Edinburgh, as thirty shillings will now.

The nephew of one of his masters, Mr Patrick Neil, formerly mentioned, reports, that young Smellie, when an apprentice, was remarkable for being what is technically called a *clean setter;* that is, his work was uncommonly neat and accurate, and required exceedingly few corrections. He was likewise uncommonly diligent and quick in his work, and might have vied with the celebrated Franklin, likewise a printer, in the quantity of *matter* which he *composed;* in ordinary language, in the quantity of work which he executed.

Young Smellie, for he was then only sixteen or seventeen years of age, made a most excellent use of the well-merited favour of his masters, as he materially contributed to the support of his sisters, who were almost entirely dependant upon his industry and fraternal affection.

While an apprentice, he asked and received liberty from his masters to attend some of the classes in the University. The printing-office in which he served was situate within the precincts of the College, and he generally continued at work till he heard the bell ring for lecture; when he immediately laid down his composing-stick, shifted his coat, ran off with his note-book under his arm, and returned to his work immediately after lecture.

In the year 1757, when Mr Smellie was still apprentice and corrector to Messrs Hamilton, Balfour, and Neil, and only in his seventeenth year, the Edinburgh Philosophical Society offered a prize for the most accurate edition of a Latin classic. On this occasion Mr Smellie, in the name of his masters, became a competitor, and produced

an edition of TERENCE in duodecimo, the whole of which he set up and corrected himself, and for which the prize was awarded to his masters, as the work was published under their names. This medal is of silver, and of considerable size. On one side the word MERENTI is surrounded by a wreath of laurels; on the other side are these words:

THE EDINBURGH SOCIETY,
TO MESSRS HAMILTON, BALFOUR, AND NEIL,
PRINTERS IN EDINBURGH,
FOR THEIR EDITION OF TERENCE,
M,DCC,LVII.

THE book itself, however, is dated in 1758; it being an ordinary circumstance with booksellers and printers, towards the close of a year, to date publications as if printed in the subsequent year. The following account of this edition by HARWOOD is repeated by DIBDIN, in his Introduction to the Classics, vol. ii. p. 270.

TERENCE, *Edinburgh*, 1758, in 12mo.

"THIS edition," says HARWOOD, "was purposely published for the prize offered by the

University of Edinburgh, and obtained it. It is an *immaculate* edition, unknown to the Bipont editors."

Harwood is however mistaken in referring the offered prize to the University of Edinburgh; it was given by the Edinburgh Philosophical Society, originally instituted in 1731 for the improvement of medical knowledge; remodelled in 1739, so as to include subjects of philosophy and literature, under the name of the Edinburgh Society for improving Arts and Sciences, but more generally known by the name of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh. In its original establishment, it published several valuable volumes under the name of Medical Essays; and in its more extended constitution, other volumes called Essays and Observations Physical and Literary. In 1782, the members of this Society, with many other eminent, scientific, and literary men, were incorporated, by charter from the King, into the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

This edition of Terence, besides its incomparable accuracy, is a very beautiful piece of typography, and might challenge compa-

rison in point of fine printing with any of the boasted works which have issued of late years from the crack printing-houses either of London or Edinburgh. In point of accuracy it leaves them all behind. The ink used on this occasion is said to have been made from the soot, or lamp-black, gathered from the University lamps. The edition has now become very scarce and dear, a perfect copy selling for two guineas.

It appears from one of the letters which will be found in the sequel, that Messrs Hamilton, Balfour, & Neil carried on a newspaper at this period named the Chronicle. What particular concern Mr Smellie took in the conduct of this paper is unknown; but, as corrector of the press to his masters, it is highly probable that the selection of articles of intelligence would chiefly rest on his care. From the same authority, this newspaper seems to have been unsuccessful; as in 1759 its publication was limited to once a week, and it was altogether discontinued long ago. During many years the publication of newspapers in Edinburgh was a poor concern; and three separate papers, two of them thrice a week, and the third twice, afforded very scan-

ty profits to their proprietors. These three are now the sources of very considerable opulence; and besides their eight weekly sheets, five other newspapers are published weekly by new adventurers, including a Gazette or government newspaper.

The period of his indentures expired on the 1st of April 1759, when he must have attained to his nineteenth year. By this time, or soon afterwards, his merits as a steady compositor and accurate corrector, and the value of his early attainments in literature and science, became known to Messrs Murray & Cochrane, then very respectable printers in Edinburgh, and which house still carries on business under the same firm. Besides their ordinary business as printers, these gentlemen carried on the Scots Magazine, a monthly periodical work of miscellaneous literature, which has maintained considerable celebrity among works of that description, from 1st January 1739 to the present day, a long period of seventy-two years; while numerous rivals in both of the British metropolitan cities, and in many provincial towns, have strutted their hour on the public stage, and have successively dropped into oblivion. The

nature, extent, and objects of this compound literary, and laborious engagement, in which Mr SMELLIE was employed when only nineteen years of age, will best appear from the following letter from his respectable employers, here copied from the original in the possession of his eldest son and successor.

No. I.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE, *Printer in Edinburgh.*

SIR, *Edinburgh, 6th September* 1759.

You and we have lately come to the following agreement: viz. You engage to employ your time in correcting for us and partners, printers in Edinburgh; in collecting such articles for our Magazine as we shall direct; in making abstracts, extracts, or transcripts of such pieces as we may have occasion for; or in writing accounts; and, in cases of hurry of printing, in composing, or case work; for which we hereby agree to pay you sixteen shillings Sterling weekly. This agreement to last for a whole year,

from and after the twenty-second day of September current, and thereafter till you or we chuse to discontinue it, of which the party desirous to discontinue the agreement shall give the other three months premonition or previous notice. As this letter is binding on us for the performance of our part of the agreement, we desire that you will write us an answer that may be equally binding on you for your part of the same.

We are, Sir,

Your well-wishers and humble servants,

ALEXANDER MURRAY.

JAMES COCHRANE.

As the engagement with Messrs MURRAY & COCHRANE began in the end of September 1759, and continued till the end of March 1765, when Mr SMELLIE first settled in business as a master printer, he must have been engaged in the conduct of the Scots Magazine for the five entire years or volumes, 1760, 1, 2, 3, and 4, besides three numbers or months of 1759, and three months of 1765. But no memorial remains of the precise extent of his labours in this literary and miscellaneous journal; though, from the tenor

of the letter of engagement with his masters, he probably had nearly the entire charge of its compilation. The actual firm of this co-partnery was SANDS, MURRAY, & COCHRANE. Mr SANDS was a respectable bookseller in Edinburgh, who was succeeded in business by the late Mr CHARLES ELLIOT, who was remarkably liberal in his payments to authors, and who, as will be more particularly mentioned hereafter, gave to Mr SMELLIE the largest sum ever paid in Edinburgh, at and before that time, for literary property, being one thousand guineas, besides other contingent advantages, for a single quarto volume, not one sentence of which was composed at the time the bargain was concluded.

Mr SMELLIE had very early qualified himself for thus rising beyond the mere servile and mechanical part of his profession, by carefully preserving and extending the education which had been bestowed upon him by his father. Although not mentioned in the foregoing letter of agreement with Messrs MURRAY & COCHRANE, it will be seen in some of the letters in his subsequent correspondence, that they indulged him, whether from stipulation, or from voluntarily noticing his strong

propensity for improvement in science and literature, does not certainly appear, with the allowance of three hours a day for the prosecution of his studies. This valuable privilege he eagerly availed himself of, by devoting that time to the acquisition of knowledge; for which purpose he sedulously attended the various courses of lectures then delivered in the University, and profited by the instruction of several eminent teachers in various branches of knowledge. We have no distinct account now remaining of the precise course of his studies; but, from circumstances which will be found in that portion of his correspondence which we have deemed of sufficient interest to be inserted in these Memoirs, it is quite certain that he went through a regular series of those academical exercises which are prescribed as the necessary preparations for entering upon the study of theology. These, besides the Humanity and Greek classes, are the lectures upon Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, with Logic, Rhetoric, or Belles Lettres, Metaphysics, or Moral Philosophy, and Hebrew. We know likewise, from the sources of information above referred to, that he carefully attended all the medical lectures of the University, including Botany, for which he had a decid-

ed taste, and that he retained during his whole life a peculiar preference for Natural History.

In proof of his early and sedulous application to various studies, the following extract of a letter from the Rev. Dr Thomas Miller, minister of Cumnock, to the present Mr Alexander Smellie, is adduced.

No. II.

From Dr Thomas Miller *to Mr* Alexander Smellie.

Sir, *Cumnock, 11th July* 1810.

So long ago as the year 1758, your worthy father and I were fellow students at the Hebrew class, which he attended for the sake of enabling him to superintend the printing of a Hebrew Grammar edited by our then teacher, Professor Robertson. From this casual acquaintance between us, a more intimate intercourse ensued, which subsisted for several years, and which only ceased by my leaving town in 1764, and thereafter residing in the country. We never corresponded by letters; nor do I recollect that any passed between us but at the time of publishing his Philosophy of Natural History, which, for his

sake, I felt interested in, and which I was so fortunate as to be considerably instrumental in spreading in this corner of the country.

We were for some years joint members of a Physical or Natural Philosophy Society. In that society, the discourse you refer to, if I mistake not, was first delivered. It was soon after delivered in the Botanical Garden, where it attracted much attention, and procured him not only the professor, Dr Hopes premium, but very general celebrity.

As to the other prize you mention, it must, I should suppose, refer to an edition of *Phaedrus*, remarkable for its beauty and accuracy, which issued from the University printing-office, I think in 1758, in which office I believe your father was then corrector.

This is all the information I am able to give on the points you mention, which I fear you will reckon to be very imperfect. Such as it is, you will please to accept of it, as an expression of the high esteem I entertain for your father's memory, &c.

I am, Sir, &c.

Thomas Miller.

P. S.—Perhaps you may obtain fuller information than I can communicate, of your father's earlier years, from Dr Charters of Wilton, and Dr R. Hamilton of Aberdeen, who were joint members of the same society with him and me.

In the systematic prosecution of Mr Smellies academical studies, he was for the most part actuated by a general inclination to acquire and extend his knowledge in the various departments of science and literature, without any determinate prospects as to their ultimate application to personal objects of profit or establishment in life. But it will appear in the sequel, that he occasionally held particular ends in view in the prosecution of his studies, to fit him particularly for certain professional situations that were proposed to him by his contemporary friends and companions, as more eligible, in their estimation, for his literary and scientific turn of mind, than the servile drudgery of composing, imposing, and justifying the works of others. In the course of his attendance on the University of Edinburgh, he mentions in one of his letters, which will be found in these Memoirs, that Dr Wil-

LIAM CULLEN, long a bright ornament and main pillar of our medical school, and one of those who contributed most materially to the establishment of its wide celebrity and extensive utility to the healing art, presented him with a free ticket to attend his lectures. Tickets for the attendance of Mr SMELLIE on two subsequent courses of chemical lectures, given in the University of Edinburgh by Dr CULLEN, in the winter sessions of 1761 and 1762, are among the papers found in Mr SMELLIES repositories.

IT is a fact well known to the writer of these Memoirs, and which he has peculiar pleasure in using this opportunity of recording, that, though never in affluence, and hardly ever even in easy circumstances, owing to a large and expensive family, almost all grown up before his superior abilities and address had raised him to the high eminence he so deservedly attained, the highly and justly celebrated Dr CULLEN was always most liberal in giving gratis admissions to his lectures to students in narrow circumstances, and in giving attendance and advice, either gratis, or on scanty fees, to patients who could not afford to fee him properly. It is proper and necessary to add, from the same

experience, that neither of these circumstances of honourable liberality belonged exclusively to Dr Cullen, though he perhaps could less afford to bestow them than any of his eminent colleagues.

Whether proceeding from Mr Smellies own honest ambition, roused by the scientific and literary knowledge which he had acquired in the course of his studies, to aspire beyond the limited sphere in which the mechanical profession, so to speak, which he had been bred to seemed to have doomed his future days to mere laborious exertions for subsistence, or whether the idea of a change originated with some of his juvenile companions and fellow students, cannot now be certainly known; but it appears obvious from some of his letters, that he hesitated for several years whether he should persist in his employment as a printer, or should embrace theology or medicine as the object of his future exertions. By one of his early companions and friends, he appears to have been advised to devote himself to the sacred office of a minister of the Gospel in the Church of Scotland; and by Dr William Buchan, the author of Domestic Medicine, another of the intimate companions of his early studies, he was long

and eagerly solicited to adopt the practice of the healing art. However strongly these proposals, for a time, may have flattered his youthful ambition, or may occasionally have influenced the direction of his studies, he always stated what appeared to him insuperable objections to either plan, and persisted to the last in prosecuting the business of a printer. During the course of his studies, the wages of his professional employment were indispensibly necessary to his subsistence; and his early marriage precluded all possibility, after that decisive step, of abandoning a certain though scanty income for the mere chance of higher emoluments at a future period in a profession of more fancied respectability. The ideas which he entertained on this subject will be best understood from the remains of the correspondence which took place between him and some of his companions, extracts from which will be found in the sequel of these Memoirs.

While Mr Smellie was employed as corrector of the press to Messrs Sands, Murray, & Cochrane, some disputes arose between the journeymen printers in Edinburgh and their masters about a rise of wages, the

particulars of which are not now known. On this occasion Mr SMELLIE drew up an ingenious scheme of arrangement for calculating the prices to be paid for setting up types, upon fixed principles, in proportion to the number of letters contained in each page of differently sized types; but which does not seem of sufficient importance for insertion.

ONE part of the plan which Mr SMELLIE appears to have laid down for himself in the prosecution of his studies, and in order to acquire facility in committing his thoughts to paper on literary and scientific subjects, was by the encouragement of free correspondence with his friends and companions, of which some early fragments still remain. Among the earliest of these letters are some which were written to him from London by WILLIAM TOD a journeyman printer, who had been his fellow compositor in the printing-house of Messrs HAMILTON, BALFOUR, & NEIL. One of those has no date, and its writer is uncertain, though probably from the same person. No part of Mr SMELLIES own correspondence on this occasion remains, except one letter of the year 1766, apparently to Mr

Tod, which, on that account, has been inserted after those from that person.

No. III.

From Mr William Tod *to Mr* William Smellie.

Dear Willie, *London, 29th November* 1759.

On my leaving Edinburgh, I promised to write you sooner than to any other in the house; and am afraid you will impute my neglect to disregard, as Willie Auld has received several letters from me. Suffer me, then, to assure you, that my friendship is not in the least degree diminished, and that the reason of Willie Auld and I corresponding so much together has been, that business and particular concerns between us has required it. I might also tell you, that I have been little at ease and in the capacity of relishing agreeable correspondence since I came here, and that it is not above six or eight weeks since I wrote my first letter to an uncle whom I much value. But to insist long in excuses of this kind, would seem to put a value on what I am sensible is of little

importance, namely, my own comments and clish-ma-clavers *. I shall conclude, therefore, this preamble about nothing, by assuring you, that my apprehension of your taking my dilatoriness amiss renders me uneasy; and were it not for shame, I would crave a few lines in your own good time.

If I could at all relish or agree with my business, I should like my present situation well enough; for the English are a free, open-hearted, communicative people. The main difference, as to work, between this and Edinburgh, is, that a journeyman runs less risk of wanting it. For the rest, considering the difference of living, I do not think it is very material. All types below *English* are at the rate of a groat the thousand, but English is somewhat more.

The people are very good natured; but have a way of jeering one another, which they call *running-the-rigg*, and *going-off* upon each other, and can say the severest things, and vent the most poignant sarcasms, with the greatest serenity and good nature ima-

* A Scots phrase, signifying unprofitable conversation.

ginable. They take the Scots to be very clanish and easily touched; and for this reason, whenever a *raw Sawney*, as they call him, is *new-hauled*, or fresh imported, his jealous ear is very soon alarmed with reflections he may think unmannerly upon the poverty of his country. Such as, What deil brings you here? Get home to your crowdie, and be d—d to you! Ha' ye got your parritch yet? When will you get a sheeps head or a haggis, you ill-far'd lown? Did you ever see meat in Scotland, saving oat-meal hasty pudding? Keep out of his way, Thomas, or you'll get the itch! These, and a thousand such, they utter out of pure *rigg* and merriment, without having the least antipathy at the person, or any desire to affront him.

I WAS much surprised to hear of your late change, and also of the shiftations of JOHN REID; but I would not desire to hear more of it than is agreeable to you to unfold, for good reasons of your own. I long much to hear from you, and the affection I bear you will make any thing from you agreeable. I hope I shall soon have more freedom to write you at large, and to revive a correspondence I shall be fain to cultivate. Send

me some printing news concerning Mr Hamilton's paper, its success, and your reflections upon it;—about the Green Devil and his new partner,—whether his wig and deportment be as cleverly mechanical as Peters, &c. &c. &c.; and by so doing you will oblige your very curious and sincere friend, &c.

William Tod.

No. IV.

From Mr William Tod *to Mr* William Smellie.

Dear Willie, *26th May* 1760.

Your letter diverted me highly, particularly your account of the Devils empire falling to the ground, and of the usurpation and progress of Oliver, with his serious and deliberative manner of forming an angle with his arms before he closed with a soul reviving pinch; though you forgot to mention whether he implored a blessing. I even took out my snuff-box, for I too am turned snuffer, and attempted to take a pinch with the same propriety of action; but, alas, I found

it would not do, as my manner is too much formed on the modern model; so, after giving it two or three tosses and flourishes in the profane vulgar way, I was fain to slip it again into my pocket.

HAVING read your letter two or three times over, I consigned it to the pocket of my new coat. "Lie you there," said I, "till the Lords day; for, if I keep you in the printing-house, you'll make me neglect business." I thought SMELLIE had turned serious since he commenced corrector; but what is bred in the bone, you know, &c. Alas! I reckoned without my host; for my new suit never graced my back another Sunday. Some thief stole in, and carried off my new coat, with your letter in its pocket.

I AM glad to hear from WILLIE HAY that you are better situate at present than you were with HAMILTON & BALFOUR. The bad success of the Chronicle has affected me much; its being reduced to a weekly paper, &c. Mr HAMILTON seems to have had a good deal of uneasiness of late, which must give concern to all who have any generosity in their nature.

I HEAR that Jo. REID is going into partnership with SANDS and DONALDSON, and that there is a great rivalship at present in Edinburgh. I shall be obliged to you for what particulars you have leisure to communicate concerning the printing-business in general in your town, but must leave the time to yourself. I am, &c.

WILLIAM TOD.

No. V.

From Mr WILLIAM TOD *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR WILLIE, *London, 6th July* 1760.

I am glad to find you agree with me in admiring ADDISON and SWIFT. ADDISON makes this remark in one of his Spectators, "That people, when they read a performance, are very inquisitive about the minutest trifles relating to the author, as whether he be of a fair, brown, or black complexion, &c.; and seem to conceive that the knowledge of these particulars contribute greatly to the understanding of his work." This is a piece of very fine satire. Men are too often measur-

ed by their opinions, and, on the contrary, opinions are too often measured by considering the men who advance them. These hedges of distinction not only obstruct charity, but knowledge. Who told you this? *This* is what is said by the orthodox party, or the moderate party! Let us throw away those distinctions, weighing opinions only, and endeavouring to suck honey from every flower, without seeming to know whether either of them is a HUTCHINSONIAN or NEWTONIAN, orthodox or heterodox.

THOUGH he who starts a subject has the advantage of making a choice, he still labours under a disadvantage. The other may say, What have I to do with your Stoicism or Epicureanism? Or he may enter so far into the subject, and turn short with the same repartee. Let, therefore, any subject proposed by me the Commentator be agreeable to you the Connoisseur; and I promise, on my part, to enter willingly into any one you may pick out; and shall not pretend to any other plea but utter ignorance of the subject. In this point I yield to you without flattery; but I may sometimes divert you on subjects of which you know little; while you, perhaps,

may apply to me these lines of the Lord-knows-whom, POPE, I believe:

> Sometimes to sense, sometimes to nonsense leaning,
> And always blund'ring round about his meaning.

Or these from HUDIBRAS;

> His notions fitted things so well,
> That which was which he could not tell.

THE Commentator subscribes himself the Connoisseurs most devoted, &c.

WILLIAM TOD.

No. VI.

From Mr WILLIAM TOD *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR WILLIE,

I take your quick return very kindly; and am so far from being offended at the humorous picture you draw of me, that I shall heighten your representation with the additional idea of a beard and breast embellished with reddish snuff; for my beard is red, and the snuff matched, as I don't chuse to make

a contrast of my visage. Admitting your supposition, that my dilatoriness proceeded from laziness, I think you have used me gently rather than roughly. I regard you, and could not brook the thought of indifference on your side.

In ridiculing others for imperfections in body or mind, we often tacitly insinuate, that we ourselves are possessed of the contrary perfections. "The Commentator is a spindle-shanked, thin-gutted, long-necked fellow; obliged every moment to keep his hands at his waste to prevent his falling in two by the middle, or at least to swinge about his arms to preserve a proper balance; while the Connoisseurs head, by being placed on a short thick neck, and that again supported by a massy trunk and stout limbs, is enabled to take a more steady survey of the works of Creation *."

* The passages in this letter between inverted commas, are evidently quotations from Mr Smellies letter, to which this is an answer, and may therefore be considered as the earliest specimens of his composition. In this correspondence, Mr Smellie appears to have acquired the sobriquet of Connoisseur, and in a great measure to have dictated the subjects of intercourse; while his

You fall foul of me for a parcel of Irish bulls, some of them designed, and rank this expression among the rest, "A larger field is opened betwixt WILLIE AULD and me than betwixt you and me." You add, "I maintain the field is the same, and that the subjects of intercourse are infinite." I shall not maintain any thing about the matter, as the subject seems a little abstracted; and shall, therefore, only propose a few things relative to it, to the consideration of the Connoiseur. Perhaps the affair may divert us.

IF we attempted to disuse every phrase that is not strictly philosophical, would not we confine language more than the present state of human nature admits of? All subjects are infinite, every subject is infinite. There seems here to be a contradiction. But does not the difficulty vanish, when we consider what we mean by infinite applied in this manner? If every subject be infinite, is it not an absurdity to suppose one larger than another? And, if all subjects taken together be infinite, is it not absurd to call one sub-

friend was contented with the more humble denomination of Commentator.

ject infinite, which is but a part of all subjects? You may illustrate this point a little, by the infinite divisibity of matter, for the consideration of matter is less abstruse. But what do we mean by *infinite* thus applied to the word subject? You know it is a maxim among philosophers, that nothing can be called great or small but by comparison. Thus, it would seem in the present case, that when we call a subject infinite, we compare it with our own understanding, which is limited, and only say, that the one is not commensurate to the other; or, in other words, that our understanding, far from being capable of comprehending all subjects, cannot penetrate to the bottom of any one subject. Thus any subject may be called infinite with regard to our understandings; because, if we cannot see to its bottom, it is the same thing to us as if it were infinite in the strictest sense of the word.

Are there not some subjects in which we lose ourselves sooner than in others? Are there not some subjects capable of being extended to a greater length than others, so as more to promote the purposes of instruction and entertainment than others? What then

is the absurdity of saying, "A larger field is opened," &c.?

"YES, Commentator," say you; "there is a very great absurdity; for, taking the thing in your own light, there is still, if you consider the fact, the same field betwixt you and me as between WILLIE AULD and you, &c. Open but the field. Do you think because he has got a pair of longer and more limber supporters, that he can surmount obstacles quicker than I? Are you exactly acquainted with what measure of active powers we are severally possessed? Because you are two tall thin fellows, is that a reason why I should yield you every thing? Mens minds are not measured by inches, remember that."

I AM not obliged to defend the phrase, "A larger field opened," because it is none of my invention, but used by good authors, and readily enough understood. But, for the jokes sake, let us examine it. Do not the words *field* and *province* admit of several different senses? Does not *field* often imply *extent* or *compass?* Is not the word *open* also often used differently? *ex. gr.* landscapes opening

to view, opening a door, &c. &c. &c. If you consider every subject as having a large compass, then the farther we penetrate into that subject, the greater number of subdivisions are continually opening to our view; or, in other words, the larger is the field that is continually opening up to us. We may conceive that a persons acquaintances, and the events that befal them in life, is a subject of large compass. Sit you down, lay your *haf-fit* * on your hand, and I'll lay you a bet you shan't enumerate one third of your acquaintances. When I came to London, I saw a great many known faces, whom I should never have dreamed of meeting. Is not every mans case, allowing for difference of years, &c. the same in this respect? I shall suppose that, on my leaving Edinburgh, the acquaintances mutual between you and me were much the same with those mutual between WILLIE AULD and me. When we were in London together, we enlarged the compass of our acquaintances. A change of fortune to any of these new acquaintances, his marriage, setting up in business, &c. interest and entertain WILLIE AULD; but would scarce-

* A contraction of half-head, implying the cheek.

ly entertain you at all, as not knowing the persons. Is not the compass of acquaintances betwixt WILLIE AULD and me enlarged beyond what it was in Edinburgh; and therefore the measure of our entertainment thereby enlarged.

As to what you say of subjects being infinite, it is very true. "Why then, Commentator," you will say, "do you consider only the compass of acquaintances?" Should we not consider the mind of man which acts on subjects, as well as the subjects acted upon? Matters of fact, that are daily passing before our eyes, are easily taken in and retained; while a man may find himself so circumstanced as either not to have time to look out for objects of entertainment foreign to business, or may find both mind and body so jaded by the pursuit of business as to be incapable of indulging himself in the most favourite study. May not this man be almost allowed to say he has only one field? You are much happier in this respect than I, being much more capable of doing a great deal of work, and indulging a good deal of speculation on the same day. Sunday is the only day on which I have time to make observa-

tions; the only time, I may almost say, I think at all; and it is on Sunday that I write this long *rigmarol.* I leave these things to your own consideration, claiming no superiority; and would rather yield a point at any time than enter into controversy, which is endless. Be it an Irish bull, or be it not, the Commentator shall not fall out with the Connoisseur about the matter. If the Connoisseur thinks the Commentator very fond of controversy from the present specimen, he will do well to remember, that he endeavoured to fasten an Irish bull upon the Commentator, with the formality of an "I maintain," tacked to his assertion, and plainly indicated he did not think the Commentator fell into this bull designedly, but through ignorance. Does then the Commentator decline corresponding with the Connoisseur from an impression that he has nothing to yield in return? By no means. The Commentator has a great regard for the Connoisseurs good opinion; and only hints these things by way of claiming a little indulgence. The Commentator is a very various being; sometimes like brisk beer, sometimes like flat; and shall always be very ready to write the Connois-

seur, when he finds himself in any thing of a right trim, or mellow humour.

With regard to herbs and plants, &c. I know little about them. There is, however, a coffee-house about two miles from London, where I have seen a number of foreign animals, birds, &c. Bird of paradise, rattle-snake, tarantula, &c. And another thing which would perhaps afford you small entertainment, namely, the china plate out of which Queen Elizabeth used to eat her strawberries. With regard to the court end of the town, though I have little knowledge that way, I shall soon take an opportunity of disclosing what I may hear or see on that subject; and shall, therefore, beg leave to propose a few preliminaries at present towards settling a correspondence with you. I avow that I derive what I am to say from a narrow inspection into what has happened within my own breast, and am far from presuming to make any application to you. With my eyes turned inwards then, and three huge thumps on my stomach, I thus begin.

Let us be cautious of advancing any thing with a positive air; as that obstructs

knowledge very much, and the purposes of entertainment or edification will be promoted better without it. Let us, like two men in quest of a treasure, resolve to divide it between us; or, like two in a copartnery, dividing their acquisitions fairly. Advancing a thing positively is like violently grasping an acquisition which ought to be mutual.

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It has been already mentioned, that the following letter, though dated in 1766, considerably posterior to any of the former letters, appears to have been written to Mr William Tod; on which account, and because it does not particularly apply to any of the important incidents in the life of Mr Smellie, it is here inserted.

No. VII.

Mr William Smellie *to Mr* William Tod.

Dear Willie, *Edinburgh, 26th March* 1766.

It is no uncommon thing for the best of friends, during a long separation, to fall out

of the habit of corresponding. Such has been the case with us. I still have your last letter in my possession; but I believe it was written six years ago. Since that time I have had the happiness of conversing with you only once. A renewal of that long neglected correspondence would be extremely agreeable to me; and I flatter myself it would not be disagreeable to you. I shall never forget the attention you paid me while a mere carnoubie, and totally unworthy of your notice. I have since that time acquired eight or ten years more experience; and I must confess that the revolution of every year makes me rate the pleasures of human life a degree lower.

The plans and prospects of youth, as they are generally the fruit of a warm and ill-directed imagination, seldom fail to prove abortive. However, as they please at the time, instead of despising, we ought to regard them as among the innocent amusements which accompany that giddy period of our existence. As we grow in years, these airy schemes are discovered to be without foundation. This discovery undoubtedly gives us great pain, but not so exquisite as we

would imagine before hand; for, long before the period we had fixed for their accomplishment arrives, reflection informs us of the folly and extravagance of such expectations. Those only that are of a more solid and rational nature are now entertained; and even these we now begin to view with coolness and deliberation: If they succeed, the happiness is not so great as we expected: If they fail, something or other generally occurs, which, if it does not entirely annihilate, greatly blunts the pain of disappointment.

I would willingly proceed to tell you how disappointments have affected me, and from what sources I have found relief: But I must stop till I learn from yourself whether you chuse to correspond with me, and what subjects would be most agreeable to you.

The principal intention of this letter is to offer my best services to a man whom I sincerely esteem. And I beg, as the greatest mark of friendship, that you will tell me freely if I can be of any use to you. Any thing I am able to perform you may com-

mand, without reserve, from your sincere friend, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—Direct for me at Mr AULDS printing-house, Moroccos close.

MR SMELLIE was one of the early members of a society of young men, established in 1760, for their mutual improvement in literature and science, more especially in natural philosophy, to which they gave the name of the NEWTONIAN SOCIETY, in honour of the immortal NEWTON, the author, so to speak, of the true science of nature, as founded upon observation and rigid mathematical induction, in opposition to the wild theories of DESCARTES and others. While we give a decided opinion, from experience, in favour of the societies which have long subsisted at the University of Edinburgh, as highly conducive to the improvement of youth, by means of free discussion, and by the strong inducement to study, which the natural ambition of being able to appear to advantage in these societies most certainly excites; we must confess that we do not approve the adoption

of the name of any scientific person, however exalted his merit and reputation, as a denomination for a society instituted on purpose to search after truth. NEWTON in physics, LINNAEUS in botany, LAVOISIER in chemistry, WERNER in mineralogy, may all have been excellent philosophers, and vastly superior to others in their day. But to adopt their names in this manner implies the setting bounds to the researches of the members, beyond which it were indecorous to endeavour to proceed; and indicates that every attempt to call in question any of the decisions of the patron philosopher may be in some measure considered as heterodox, at least within the walls of the particular society which has thus identified itself with his doctrines. Excessive deference to any name or authority, however exalted, degenerates into party or sect, and becomes a check or restraint on the progress of research, instead of forwarding the great object of science, the expiscation of truth, either by the establishment of former opinions on new arguments and additional data, or by the discovery of error in long established opinions. It would swell these incidental observations far beyond any due bounds, to give illustration of their principles by the

many examples which might easily be found in the history of science. The mention only of the long and arbitrary reign of the Aristotelian philosophy may be quite sufficient to elucidate this idea.

Of this Society the following account has been communicated to Mr Alexander Smellie, by Dr Robert Hamilton, Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen, one of its original members. Besides which, several allusions will be found respecting it, in the correspondence of Mr Smellie, in the sequel of these Memoirs.

No. VIII.

From Dr Robert Hamilton *to Mr* Alexander Smellie.

Sir, *Aberdeen*, 1 *March* 1810.

The Newtonian Society was instituted in 1760, and was composed of young men, most of whom had completed their academical studies at the University of Edinburgh. Week-

ly meetings were held in one of the rooms of the College; at each of which a discourse was read by one of the members in rotation, and a subject discussed which had been given out for debate at the preceding meeting. The original design of the Society was chiefly directed to the prosecution of Natural Philosophy, whence the members assumed the name of the NEWTONIAN SOCIETY; but they afterwards extended their *debates* to miscellaneous subjects, though their *discourses* were always confined to natural science. The Society subsisted in this manner for several years; and though its members were fluctuating, as is usual with most societies, their number never exceeded twenty at any one time. Of the members of this Society, there are still in life, The Right Honourable ROBERT BLAIR, Lord President of the Court of Session,—the Reverend Dr SAMUEL CHARTERS, minister of Wilton,—the Reverend Dr THOMAS MILLER, minister of Old Cumnock;—and the Reverend Dr W. MACQUHAE, minister of St Quivox. Among the deceased members were, the Reverend Dr HENRY HUNTER, late of London-wall;—the Reverend Dr ANDREW HUNTER, late Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh;—the Reverend Dr THOMAS BLACKLOCK;——MICHAEL NA-

SMYTH, Esq. writer to the signet;—Dr WILLIAM BUCHAN, physician in London;——Mr JOHN PETRIE;—Mr JAMES GRAY, writer;—Mr MICHAEL GARDINER, surgeon in Dumfries;—and Dr ALEXANDER ADAMS, late Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, was Secretary. I am, &c.

ROBERT HAMILTON.

AFTER the discontinuance of the regular meetings of this Newtonian Society, some of the members met once a week, in the evening, at a tavern in Edinburgh, to keep up their acquaintance, where they partook of a very sober repast, spending their time in agreeable conversation, partly literary and partly in social cheerfulness. Of this club, which continued for some years, only two members now remain alive, Dr ROBERT HAMILTON and Dr SAMUEL CHARTERS, with both of whom MR SMELLIE always continued upon an intimate and friendly footing.

IN the year 1778, a new society was instituted under the name of the Newtonian Club, which appears to have been in some measure connected with the Philosophical Society, the original of the present Royal Society of Edinburgh. The members of this new society

were Dr Andrew Duncan, sen. present Professor of the Institutes of Medicine;—Dr James Gregory, present Professor of the Practice of Medicine;—Dr Daniel Rutherford, present Professor of Botany;—Dugald Stewart, Esq. emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy;—Mr James Russell, present Professor of Clinical Surgery,—all in the University of Edinburgh:—Dr Andrew Wardrop, Surgeon in Edinburgh;—Alexander Keith, Esq. of Revalston;—the late Dr John Hope, Professor of Botany in the University;—the late Dr John Gardiner, Physician in Edinburgh;—and the late Mr William Smellie was Secretary. Of this club or society nothing is now particularly known, except by the two following short entries in their sederunt book, now in the hands of Mr Alexander Smellie:

Edinburgh, 7th May 1778.

SEDERUNT.

Dr Andrew Duncan,
Dr Andrew Wardrop,
Mr James Russell,
Mr William Smellie.

At this meeting Dr Duncan was chosen president, and Mr Smellie secretary. It was

then resolved that every member of the Philosophical Society may, on or before next meeting, become a member of the Newtonian Club, if they chuse to apply; and that regulations should afterwards be formed for the admission of future members, and for the proper management of the club.

ANDREW DUNCAN, *P.*

June 18*th* 1778.

SEDERUNT.

Mr JAMES RUSSELL, elected President.
Dr ANDREW WARDROP,
Mr ALEXANDER KEITH,
Dr ANDREW DUNCAN,
Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE, Secretary.

THE meeting adopted the following regulations, under the name of

LAWS FOR THE NEWTONIAN CLUB.

I. THAT as a multiplicity of laws has a direct tendency to produce confusion instead of order, it is resolved to limit their number as much as possible.

II. That no person be admitted unless he be a member of the Philosophical Society.

III. That the number of members shall never exceed twenty.

IV. That one black ball shall exclude any candidate; and if only one black ball, there shall be a reballot.

V. The Newtonian Club shall meet immediately after the dismission of every meeting of the Philosophical Society.

VI. That, as this club consists entirely of philosophers, it would therefore be ridiculous to make any laws for its internal police.

While engaged in his various studies at the University of Edinburgh, Mr Smellie formed several intimate connexions among his fellow students, some of whom rose to considerable eminence in their several walks of life. With some of these gentlemen, after their removal from Edinburgh, he carried on a continued intercourse of literary correspondence, a large collection of which was once contained in his repositories, but most of it, as has been already mentioned, was unfortunately destroyed only a few years before his death. From the small remnant which has been preserved, the three following, which seem to have been written about the year 1761, are selected,

The first of these is from Mr SMELLIE to the well known Dr HENRY HUNTER, then a young man, and a divinity student, of whom the following short biographical notice may be acceptable, as he was a person of most respectable literary character.

HENRY HUNTER, D. D. a respectable, learned, and ingenious divine of the Church of Scotland, was born at Culross in Perthshire in 1741. Showing an early quickness of apprehension, his parents determined to give him the best education which their circumstances could afford. After receiving the rudiments of learning at the school of his native place, he was sent, when only thirteen years of age, to the University of Edinburgh, where he prosecuted his studies, in literature, philosophy, and divinity, with unwearied diligence and much reputation; insomuch that, at the early age of seventeen, he was appointed tutor to Mr Boswell of Balmuto, now one of the Senators of the College of Justice. He soon, however, gave up this charge on hearing that his own father lay dangerously ill, and preferred attending upon his sick parent to all the advantages he might have derived from the situation of a tutor to the eldest son

of a respectable family. On the death of his father, after an illness of four months, he was appointed tutor to the sons of the late Earl of Dundonald, then resident at Culross Abbey. In May 1764, he received his licence to preach the Gospel from the presbytery of Dunfermline, after passing through the customary trials and exercises with great applause. He now began to preach, and was always listened to with much attention and interest, and was sure to draw a crowd of hearers to any church in which it was known that he was to officiate.

About a year after his ordination, he was offered the ministry of the chapel of ease belonging to the parish of St Cuthberts at Edinburgh; and shortly afterwards received the offer of what is called the Laigh Kirk of Paisley. But having a prospect of obtaining the ministry of the parish of South Leith, which he greatly preferred, though inferior in point of stipend to both the others, he declined these two offers. He was, according to his expectations, soon afterwards unanimously chosen to be one of the two ministers of the Collegiate Church of South Leith, to which he was ordained in January 1766. In May following he mar-

ried Miss MARGARET CHARTERS, a young lady to whom he had been long attached. After he had resided about three years in Leith, he made a visit to London, where he preached at several of the Scots meeting-houses, particularly in those of Swallow-street and London-wall. Soon after his return to Leith, he received an offer of the ministry to Swallow-street Meeting-house, which then yielded a stipend of two hundred a year, more than double the income he received at Leith. He declined this offer, intimating privately to his friends, that nothing would induce him to quit his congregation at Leith, unless he were to obtain the church at London-wall. In little more than eighteen months that charge became vacant, and shortly afterwards he received an unanimous call to supply the vacancy. He accordingly left Leith, to the great regret of his parishioners, and entered on the charge of London-wall Meeting-house in August 1771. Having determined to educate his own children, he instituted a private academy in his house, where he superintended the education of a small number of pupils.

In 1784 Dr Hunter published the two first volumes of his Sacred Biography, consisting of a series of lectures or discourses on the lives of the most eminent persons recorded in the Sacred Scriptures. This work met with great success, being both original in its design, and executed in a masterly manner, and was afterwards extended to six volumes. To these he afterwards added a seventh on the life of our Saviour. He likewise published two volumes of Miscellaneous Sermons in 1795, most of which had been previously printed separately. These had been written for particular occasions, and mostly to commemorate the anniversaries of various charitable institutions; and are prefaced by short memoirs, anecdotes, and illustrations, respecting the persons, institutions, and events which gave occasion to their composition. This collection likewise contains accounts of the Scottish Incorporation, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and the Society for promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor.

In January 1797, the Rev. John Fell began a course of lectures on the Evidences of

Christianity, which he delivered on the first Sunday of every month at London-wall Meeting-house. The design being interrupted by the death of Mr Fell, who had only delivered four of these lectures, Dr Hunter was prevailed on to complete the series, originally intended to have been twelve in number. And the whole twelve were afterwards published in one volume, and quickly passed through three editions. After his decease, two volumes of sermons and other miscellaneous pieces were published, which complete the series of his original works: We shall now give a short account of his translations of the works of others.

The first of his translations was that of the singular work by Lavater on Physiognomy; in the course of which he actually travelled to Zurich in Switzerland for the express purpose of paying a visit to Lavater; whom he characterised as "a strange, wild, eccentric creature; possessing great genius, unaffected piety, unbounded benevolence, moderate learning, much caprice and unsteadiness, a mind at once aspiring by nature, and grovelling through necessity, with an endless turn to speculation and project; in a word, a cle-

ver, flighty, good natured, necessitous man." The first number of this work in English was published in January 1789, in a style of elegance, both as to printing and engraving, to which the public was then little accustomed; being among the first of those expensive publications which have done so much honour to the talents of our artists, and the public spirit of our country. In January 1795, he published a translation of EULER's Letters to a German Princess, a work which explains many of the most abstruse subjects in philosophy in a clear and simple manner. In the same year he published a translation of the Studies of Nature by BERNARDINE ST. PIERRE, A work abounding in excellent moral and philanthrophic sentiments, but full of declamation and absurd hypothesis. In 1796, he published the translation of a volume of Sermons by SAURIN; and in 1800, a translation of Memoirs of the Empress of Russia by CASTERA; which completes the list of his literary exertions.

DR HUNTER long officiated as chaplain to the Scottish Incorporation; and in August 1790 he was elected Secretary to the Corresponding Board at London of the Society

for Propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and to his exertions both of these excellent institutions owe a large portion of the ample funds they now enjoy.

Dr Hunter was a tall slender man, with a strongly marked countenance of much expression; his mind was energetic, his heart uncommonly warm, and his feelings quick and powerful. Whatever he undertook he prosecuted with ardour, and his views were always bent on some important or interesting object. Though uncommonly lively and agreeable in conversation, he had not the smallest turn for raillery or repartee, and perhaps never attempted a joke in the whole course of his life; yet had a keen relish for those social qualities in others, when innocently exerted, and was an admirable judge of humour, which he either actually did not possess, or never allowed himself to indulge. As a pulpit orator his abilities were of the first order; clear and perspicuous in reasoning and arrangement of his subject, animated and pathetic in the expression of feelings, solemn, distinct, and engaging, in delivery.

After losing three sons and a daughter, who had all grown up to the excitement of high expectations from their success in life, the feelings of the Doctor were irreparably injured by these repeated shocks upon a susceptible heart endowed with warm affections, and their loss preyed deeply on his constitution. Yet he repined not, and scarcely complained, but endeavoured to comfort the remaining branches of his family; but the struggle between duty and affectionate remembrance undermined his constitution: In summer 1802 he was suddenly seized with faintness in the pulpit. Soon afterwards he acquired a severe cold by walking on the damp grass for a considerable time near Greenwich, which brought on a cough and pain in his breast. He was advised to try Bristol, where he died on the 27 October 1802, aged 61 years. His character is summed up by a friend as follows: "Although one man may be found to fill his place as a minister, a second as a man of active charity and benevolence, a third as an instructor of youth, and a fourth as a literary character; yet we must not expect to see a man speedily arise capable of sustaining *all* these various cha-

racters in *one* equal to HENRY HUNTER*." His widow survived him only nine months, and died of a few hours illness. His daughter, Miss AGNES HUNTER, has lately published a respectable miscellaneous work, principally calculated for the improvement of young persons of her own sex.

THERE is a pleasure in recording departed worth, which, if any apology is necessary, must excuse the length of the foregoing biographical sketch of one of the earliest friends of Mr SMELLIES youth. They had much resemblance in one circumstance, that both were equally negligent of the goods of fortune, though both had numerous families to which they were both most affectionately attached.

THE two letters which follow that from Mr SMELLIE to Mr HENRY HUNTER, are to Mr SMELLIE from Mr SAMUEL HUNTER, an intelligent young man who was bred to the ministry in the Church of Scotland, but died in early life before having procured any charge. The familiar expression *Hall*, used

* Sermons, &c. of the late H. HUNTER, D. D. I. xlvi.

by Mr SMELLIE in the immediately following letter, arose from this circumstance, that he and his young friend had been accustomed to read the works of SHAKESPEARE together, probably as an exercise in elocution.

No. IX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to Mr* HENRY HUNTER.

DEAR HALL, 1761.

I AM afraid, that whoever is so stupid as to procrastinate till he feels the secret motions of the spirit (but, by the bye, what spirit do you mean? Is it the spirit of dullness, of motion, of friendship, or of poetry? If any but the last, I must henceforth consider you to be as great a sinner as any divine in the church) will, agreeably to my material system, never be able to move either leg or limb. Instead of waiting for the spirit, I have delayed writing my friend till I had got a stout dinner of roast beef, with a pretty tolerable suck of Scotch porter. Hence, whatever follows flows from matter, and matter alone, without the intervention of any paul-

try god or goddess. Society is doubtless the peculiar happiness of the human species, according to all writers, both ancient and modern, the author of this letter excepted. I say, I affirm, nay, if it please your reverence, I shall swear, that every order of brutes, from the grasshopper that chirps in the meadow to the lion that roars in the forest, delight as much in society, especially on particular occasions, as those of the human race. I could prosecute this theme to a very great length. For example, I could prove even to your satisfaction, a better phrase than to a demonstration, that brutes associate together from far more disinterested motives than men. Why do men flock to large cities as bees to a hive? You, and all the orthodox, will answer, Because mankind are social animals. But I say, because they are rapacious animals. They come together in order to trick, cheat, and prey upon each other. Of all animals men are unquestionably the most unsocial. Why do men go in crowds to the tavern? Not surely because they love one another sincerely; otherwise in every room we should find a circle of sincere and disinterested friends. But you well know, dear *Hall*, how seldom this is the case. The in-

satiable desire after wine, humour, and frivolity, or dissipation, forces every individual to run to taverns and tippling houses. Hence vanity, debauchery, and selfishness, are the true sources of this and every kind of human society. Not so the beasts of the field. The fewer horses or sheep there may be in a pasture, so much the better is the chear; and yet experience teaches, that a single horse in a meadow, or a single sheep on a mountain, is not half so gay, frolicsome, or happy, as if some hundreds of their kind fed together, although by that means they may even be forced to live on short allowance. Hence horses and sheep are more social animals than the so much boasted lords of the creation.

Let me see; what confounded noise is this about horses and sheep, and meadows and mountains, and society, &c. O! I have it. So you are now become portioner of a bee-hive:—an excellent member, i'faith! You unquestionably introduced yourself to Jamie Spittal, that penetrating bee-gazer, and the other members of that respectable body, in the following strain. "Gentlemen bee-masters! I return you my most hearty and gracious thanks for that very singular

instance of your generosity in admitting me to be one of your society. Think not, however, that I am an entire novice in your profession. No; I have lain three days and three nights prostrate on my belly, exactly fronting the door of a bee-hive, with my head and shoulders raised to an angle of 30° 3′ 45″, in order to inspect the Empress-queen; and never once shut my eyes till her Imperial Majesty, attended by the lords and ladies of the bed-chamber, &c. stalked forth in awful procession to feast my wearied and wondering imagination. Nor is this the only instance of my heroism. Not to mention my infinite reading on this amiable and dignified subject, I have composed, be not surprised Gentlemen, a whole treatise on bees, which I had the honour to read before the celebrated Newtonian Society, and which that honourable body was pleased to stamp with public approbation. I shall not, however, entirely anticipate my own merit; but conclude with a cup of thanks (N. B. the strong ale *quaich* * is now at the door of your lips) to thee, O Jamie Spittal! to the

* A wooden dish, anciently much used in Scotland before the introduction of pottery.

weavers, tailors, tide-waiters, tars, wheelbarrow makers, soutars †, flunkies ‡, and the remanent members of this worthy and truly learned society."

Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Address to me (no inconsiderable personage) at COCHRANE & MURRAYS, Craigs close.

No. X.

From Mr SAMUEL HUNTER *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

THE chief design of this is to remind you of my existence. How are you? What are you doing? What have you been doing? For my poor part, I have been chiefly employed in making and uttering sermons. As to essay making, I have done but little; yet I have made one upon *Daughters*, containing much useful instruction for country ministers

† Shoemakers. ‡ Liverymen.

and lairds, and for town merchants and printers too. I have not sent it, because, in the present scattered state of our fraternity, I imagine you would not apply to it the edge of critical sagacity. This shews how much my style is improved. The scattering of the brethren will certainly be a great loss to our plan; as it cools our zeal, and will, I am afraid, render it impossible for us to have our labours revised and corrected by each other.

I WRITE this on Sunday, in full possession of the house, the family being gone to an occasion *. Had you been with me, I should have been happier, but I had not written so much of a sermon. I am gradually proceeding to a point which I consider to be absolutely necessary for preachers; which is, to have no concern about what the hearers may think of me. I can easily be indifferent as to the opinion of the people; but it is not easy to get rid of a concern about the opinion of a person one thinks has sense; yet that too must be attained, because you can never know peoples opinions, and their tastes

* A customary Scots phrase, implying attendance on the Sacrament of Communion.

are so very different, many of them even so absurd, that it is impossible to please all. There is another more stickingly vexatious consideration to people in our way, which is the improbability of doing any good by preaching. The people seem so incapable of thinking, and so attached to a set of notions, that I sometimes think there is little probability of being able to touch them. Sometimes one would think they shew marks of thought and candour, which give room for hope. The truth is, they would be much better than they are, if the ministers did not spoil them. These have got a particular set of words and notions which they can preach upon extempore, and to which, I believe, they have themselves an immoveable attachment, and are alarmed with any thing which seems to differ from them. Their consciences are not very good about extempore preaching, and they wish, therefore, to make people believe that reading of sermons is worse than any thing. They are unwilling to be at the trouble of preaching on any other subjects than what they have always been accustomed to; and they wish, therefore, that nobody else would, and that no other manner of sermons should be acceptable to the hearers.

Perhaps all this is dictated to me by pride; and I do not, therefore, require that you should believe it. Meantime, I should be happy to have one friend by me, to whom I might talk over every thing I am in doubt about, and speak every thing I think. My sense of the need of this induced me to talk a little to you, but you make no answer.

You have never returned my servitude. Perhaps you may have had a letter in your pocket these two months, and think you sent it to me. Pray look; for I have received none. I could write away with great ease; but on looking back to what I have written, I think you have enough of the goodness. The above has lain by me a long time; and having now taken it into my head to send you a letter, I have not time to write another. Will you come hither? If you can afford a poor horse to accompany you, I can get one to obviate you. Let me know; and write if you cannot come. Let me know your history.—Tell me if * * * * * * is come. If I can see you all no other way, I will come to see you. Kind remembrance to the club and family. Yours, &c.

SAMUEL HUNTER.

No. X.

Mr Samuel Hunter *to Mr* William Smellie.

Dear Sir, *No date.*

Having thought of an argument for the moral character of the Deity somewhat different from any I remember to have seen, I intend in this letter to lay it before you. If it has any force at all, it deserves attention; if it has none, it only goes the way that many others have gone before it.

By particular affections implanted in human nature, men are naturally led in some cases to virtuous actions. Conscience, approving of every virtuous action, and disapproving the contrary, has a farther tendency to make us virtuous; and, since conscience is naturally superior to all particular affections, and has a right to have its dictates listened to, it is a declaration from the Author of our nature of what conduct he requires from us. Any advantages to be ob-

tained by a virtuous conduct are farther incitements to virtue. By the constitution of nature, then, men are directed to be virtuous. There is, from analogy, a presumption that GOD directs his creatures to that conduct which he approves ; he approves of virtue ; and a being, therefore, who approves of virtue, is virtuous. The same considerations may, I think, be so extended as to give some ground to think he is so in a higher degree than appears in the government of the world.

IN the constitution of things, there is plainly a plan laid down, which, if it were kept to, would render men more happy, and would proportion their happiness more exactly to their virtue, than we find to be the case in the government of the world. Did *we* obey the dictates of conscience in every case, we should be saved from many of the inconveniencies which we bring upon ourselves : Did *others* obey their consciences, we should be saved from most of the calamities brought upon us by others. In cases where a man offends, every mans having a sense of merit or demerit, together with an indignation at vice, has a tendency to punish

vice more uniformly than it actually is punished. Now, if we look for the character of the Deity, rather in the plan that he has laid down, and in what he has done himself, than in those things which are the consequences of the actions of voluntary agents, we shall find his intention to be, that men should all be virtuous, and happy in proportion to their virtue. In order to shew that there shall be a state of retribution, we have then only to shew that God keeps to his first intention; that his plan is upon the whole consistent, and is carried into execution; and of this we have as strong proofs as analogy can afford; as in every instance we know of or can conceive, laying a plan and giving it up proceeds from weakness or want of foresight. We have also proofs of God acting according to consistent plans, from the observations we can make on the works of nature. We may come to the same conclusion by a shorter road. God has made us to approve of perfect virtue; which is a direction for us to practise perfect virtue, But God does not shew perfect virtue in the government of the world; he approves, therefore, of more perfect virtue than he shews, and is therefore possessed of a more perfect

virtue. The weakness of all the arguments to prove the Deity possessed of a more perfect virtue than he shews, seems to be in this, that they are all founded on analogy; and in this case, it is plain that analogy affords at best only weak evidence. Yet, in the coolest speculation, I find some of the analogies on this subject have force; and, when I would give up the point, force me to some sort of assent. So far as the point concerns practice, I think analogy sufficient to determine what is the prudent part. It is a guide we are obliged to trust; a guide whom, in most cases where we try, we find faithful and safe. Why, then, should we distrust it here?

I SHALL make no apology for troubling you with so much on this subject. I confess I am loath to give up the point, and would gladly take hold of any thing which can throw any light on the subject. If you can find time to write it will be very refreshing. You can send a letter by the Saline carrier along with the newspapers. We expect * * * * * * here some of these days. Yours, &c.

SAM. HUNTER.

In the course of his studies, Mr Smellie shewed a decided preference to that of Natural History in all its branches, and at one period became much attached to that of Botany; but his duties as corrector of the press to Messrs Murray and Cochrane did not allow him sufficient leisure for collecting so many plants himself as he wished to obtain; and in the summer 1760, being engaged in writing a Botanical essay, which afterwards gained the prize, he employed the present Mr Pillans, printer in Edinburgh, then his reading boy, as his assistant in traversing the fields round Edinburgh early in the mornings in search of flowers. His instructions were, to gather every *plant*, of whatever nature, that had a flower; which, when obtained and examined, Mr Smellie carefully inserted in a folio book kept for that purpose, writing on the opposite page a particular account of the plant, with its nature and virtues, and every circumstance he knew respecting it. At this time he collected an extensive Hortus Siccus, containing above 400 native plants; most of which he presented to Dr Hope, then Professor of Botany, and afterwards gave a duplicate of his collection to the Antiquarian Society. The fol-

lowing letters from Dr HOPE, relative to the collection of dried plants which Mr SMELLIE had transmitted to him, shews either that Mr PILLANS may have been mistaken in the year in which he was employed to gather the wild flowers, or that Mr SMELLIE had continued his labours on this subject for some years afterwards, before he considered his Hortus Siccus as worthy of being presented to the Professor. There is no date to the first of these letters; but as the subject is obviously continued in the second, they must have been both written nearly about the same time.

No. XI.

Dr JOHN HOPE *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR SIR,

I have sent GEORGE to know at what time I shall send him with a careful porter for the plants. I beg that you may reserve some of them for yourself, as I should be sorry to rob you of them all. I shall call at your sisters at ten o'clock. Yours, &c.

JOHN HOPE.

No. XII.

Dr JOHN HOPE *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR SIR, *Edinburgh, 7th Feb.* 1764.

I HAVE the pleasure of acquainting you, that your collection of dried plants gave entire satisfaction to all the gentlemen who assisted in adjusting the annual premium; and none scrupled to say that it well deserved to be distinguished by some honorary reward.

YOUR collection, made under the unfavourable circumstances of a constant avocation, flatters me with the hope that no stranger will next year carry off the honorary medal; and that it will be the lot of your successful application to this your favourite study. I am, &c.

JOHN HOPE.

ACCORDING to the prediction in the above letter, Mr SMELLIE gained the honorary gold

prize medal, given by the Professor for the best botanical dissertation, in the following year, when he presented his Dissertation on the Sexes of Plants, the substance of which he afterwards published in the first volume of his Philosophy of Natural History. From the next subsequent letter, it would appear that he had published this dissertation in a separate pamphlet.

This prize medal which Mr Smellie obtained is not now to be found in his repositories, but its description will be seen in the subsequent letter from Dr William Wright, formerly an eminent physician in Jamaica; who, in the intervals of his professional labours, has largely illustrated the botanical riches of that island, and has added several valuable remedies from the vegetable kingdom to the list of the Materia Medica. This letter may be considered important, as it establishes some facts in the life of Mr Smellie, to be noticed hereafter.

No. XIII.

From Dr WILLIAM WRIGHT *to* ALEXANDER KINCAID TATE, *Esq.*

DEAR SIR, *Luss, 29th June* 1810.

MR ALEXANDER SMELLIE wrote me a few days before I left town, but time did not permit me to reply. You will please to say to him, that I often met his father at literary societies, and at the houses of friends. I knew him to be an able natural historian, and a good botanist. He published a pamphlet against the Linnæan system, which gave offence to the friends of the illustrious Swede: and indeed it could not be otherwise, as Mr SMELLIE had not any thing to put in the room of it.

MR SMELLIE had a hand in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review with Dr GILBERT STUART, one of the ablest and severest works that ever appeared in this or any other country. As I lodged in the same house with Dr STUART in London, I learned much about Mr

Smellie and his friends. Dr Stuart assured me that the Domestic Medicine was originally written by Mr Smellie, and that Dr Buchan had only to adopt it as his own.

Tell Mr Smellie that I got a gold medal from Dr Hope. The device on it is a cedar and a low plant: Round the margin is the following inscription,—"*A Cedro ad Hyssopum usque:*" At the bottom,—*I. Hope, Bot. Prof. dat.*" I recovered the dye, and gave it to his son, Dr Thomas Hope, where Mr Smellie may see it. I am, &c.

Will^m. Wright.

Without meaning to take any part in the controversy respecting the sexual hypothesis in the economy of vegetables, which is now universally adopted upon good grounds of analogical reasoning, it may be permitted to say, that every one has a clear right to state his objections to any philosophical theory or hypothesis, even although he may not be prepared to supply its place by another; and that philosophers, whose duty and profession is to search after truth, err egregiously in taking offence at any opposition which may

be made against their own opinions or those of chosen teachers. If a hypothesis is false and untenable, the sooner its weakness and absurdity is exposed, so much the better for the interests of truth and science. If just, opposition will excite the attention of ingenious men to confirm its truth by new arguments and additional facts and experiments. We believe that the progress of science has suffered incalculable injuries in all ages by the hasty adoption of ingeniously devised theories, and brilliant but fallacious systems. Leaving the Aristotelian philosophy, which held the human mind in chains of adamantine ignorance for many centuries, it may be quite sufficient to adduce the overthrow of the chemical theory of Phlogiston, in consequence of which the science of chemistry has made a thousand times more progress during the last thirty years than during thirty preceding centuries.

During the period when Mr Smellie was attending the botanical lectures, Dr Hope had the misfortune to sprain his leg so severely as to be unable to attend his class for a long time. The Doctor was so highly sensible of the knowledge and abilities of Mr Smellie,

that he requested him, on this occasion, to carry on the lectures to the students during his own necessary absence. This was actually done by Mr SMELLIE for a considerable time, his widow says during six weeks, and to the entire satisfaction of his fellow students.

THE author of these Memoirs perfectly remembers to have heard Mr SMELLIE recommend the Kings Park at Edinburgh, which includes Arthurs-seat and Salisbury-craigs, as a most excellent field for the researches of a botanical student; because, owing to the great variety of its soils, exposures, and elevations, it produces an uncommonly great variety of different species of indigenous plants. He remembers likewise to have heard from Mr SMELLIE, that he had gained some wagers from his botanical companions, by engaging to collect a certain large specified number of distinct species in that place, far beyond what they believed possible, within a circle described by the extent of his hands stretched out, while his feet remained at the centre.

As Dr Hope, besides his connexion with Mr Smellies botanical studies, was one of his earliest friends and patrons, and contributed, by his assistance, to Mr Smellies first establishment in life as a master printer, to be afterwards mentioned, some biographical notice of that worthy and ingenious physician and professor seems called for in this place.

The late Dr John Hope, professor of Botany, was born at Edinburgh on the 10th of May 1725. His father, Mr Robert Hope, a respectable surgeon, was a younger son of Sir Archibald Hope, Lord Rankeilar, a distinguished senator of the College of Justice. His mother, Marion Glass, was a descendant of the ancient family of Glass of Sauchie in Stirlingshire. Dr Hope received his early education at the school of Dalkeith, then taught by the celebrated Mr Barclay. From thence he removed to the University of Edinburgh, where he prosecuted his medical studies under the elder Dr Monro and the other early luminaries who laid the solid foundation of the present celebrated medical school of that University. He became an early member of the Medical Society of Edinburgh, which has been many years

justly celebrated as an excellent source of improvement to the industrious medical students, and was one of the first of those who were raised to the rank of an honorary member in that society.

After going through the usual academical course of studies at the University of Edinburgh, he went to some of the foreign medical schools, and had the advantage of studying botany, his favourite science, under the then celebrated Bernard Jussieu, the botanical professor at Paris. Recalled to Scotland by the death of his father, he obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the University of Glasgow about the beginning of the year 1750; and was soon afterwards admitted a member of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and entered into the practice of medicine in that city; the duties of which profession he always discharged with much judgment, and with that humane attention which so much becomes a medical practitioner, and for which he was eminently conspicuous.

On the death of Dr Alston, the professorships of botany and materia medica became

vacant; and as Dr Hope had shown an early and decided partiality and attachment to the science of botany, he was considered as a fit successor for that chair; one in whose hands the credit of the university might safely be entrusted, and by whose exertions its rising fame might be both supported and extended. Accordingly, by a royal commission, dated 13th April 1761, he was appointed Kings Botanist for Scotland, and Superintendant of the Royal Garden at Edinburgh. A few weeks after receiving that commission from the Crown, Dr Hope was elected by the Town Council of Edinburgh as the successor of Dr Alston in the professorships of botany and materia medica. The Royal Garden, then occupied by the Kings botanist, was situate close to the Palace of Holyrood-house; and the professor of botany had the use of another piece of ground belonging to the City of Edinburgh, called the Physic Garden, immediately to the east of the North Bridge.

He continued for about six years to give regular courses of lectures on both these subjects, with much credit to himself, and greatly to the satisfaction and improvement of the students; teaching the science of botany during the summer months, and the materia

medica class during the winter session. But, finding his health impaired by his unwearied and constant attentions, he resigned the chair of materia medica in 1768, and confined himself to his favourite science of botany. On this occasion, he got a new commission from his Majesty on the 8th May 1768, as Regius Professor of Medicine and Botany in the University; and the offices of Kings Botanist and Superintendant of the Royal Garden, which had hitherto been granted during pleasure only, were now conferred upon him for life.

Not many months after resigning the professorship of materia medica, Dr Hope was elected one of the physicians to the Royal Infirmary, then vacant by the death of the late worthy Dr David Clerk. He continued to discharge the duties of this employment, almost to the day of his death, with much humanity, besides bestowing the most unremitting attention to a very extensive private practice.

It has been already mentioned that there were formerly two botanical gardens occupied by the professor of botany, one belonging

to the Crown, and attached to the office of Kings botanist, while the other was the property of the town, and was attached to the professorship of botany. Both of these were small and ill situate; and the public funds allowed for the purpose were quite insufficient for the establishment of a fit botanical garden, or the erection and management of proper conservatories for plants. Dr Hope therefore transmitted a judicious memorial to the Crown on this subject, during the administration of the Earl of Bute, a nobleman who was peculiarly attached to the science of botany; in consequence of which adequate funds were granted for the purpose of purchasing a convenient spot of ground, and for erecting a new botanical garden, with appropriate conservatories. On this occasion, the present garden in Leith Walk was established, planned, and perfected by Dr Hope, and is a lasting memorial of his warm and judicious attachment to the sciences in general, and to botany in particular. During the administration of the Duke of Portland, Dr Hope afterwards procured additional royal aid to this his favourite object; and through his perseverance, the University of Edinburgh finally became possessed of the most exten-

sive public botanical garden in Europe, which has been enriched with a vast variety of vegetable productions from every part of the globe.

Besides these unremitting and successful exertions in forming and enriching the botanical garden, Dr Hope was most assiduous in cherishing and promoting a zeal for botanical studies among the young gentlemen who resorted to the University of Edinburgh for medical education. His predecessor, Dr Alston, had only been in use to read a very small number of lectures on this science; but Dr Hope was quite indefatigable in perfecting his lectures, till they became as complete and comprehensive as any scientific course in the celebrated medical school of Edinburgh; and in delivering this extended course, he always evinced an ardent enthusiasm to advance and extend his favourite science, which had a powerful effect to inspire similar emotions in his hearers. Among the means he employed to excite a spirit for botanical studies, he was long in use to bestow an annual gold medal entirely at his own expence, as a spur to exertion, and as a testimony of superior merit, for the best botanical essay

written by the students on a prescribed subject; a description of which has been already given.

Besides some useful manuals for facilitating the acquisition of botany by his students, Dr Hope was long engaged in the composition of an extensive botanical work, on which he bestowed much study and reflection; the object of which was to increase the advantages which result from the highly ingenious artificial system of the great Linnaeus, by conjoining with it a system of vegetables distributed according to their great natural orders. He had made very considerable progress in this valuable work; and it is much to be regretted by every lover of botany, that the public has been deprived of the fruits of his labours on this important subject, as it was left imperfect at his death. Two valuable dissertations by this learned professor of botany have been published in the London Philosophical Transactions; one on the Rheum Palmatum, and the other on the Ferula Assafoetida, in which he demonstrates the practicability of cultivating these two officinal plants in our own country. The true rhubarb has been since extensively and successfully cultivated; but

that of the assafoetida plant has not been equally attended to.

About the year 1760, Dr Hope married Juliana, the daughter of Dr Stevenson, an eminent physician in Edinburgh, by whom he had four sons and a daughter. After long enjoying much domestic felicity, and high honour in his profession, both as a physician and professor, he died, while President of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, after a short illness, on the 10th November 1786, in the 62d year of his age. The following character of this eminent person, from the pen of his friend Dr Andrew Duncan, senior, Professor of the Institutes of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, gives a just and fair estimate of his talents and virtues *.

"Although he possessed from nature a considerable heat of temper, yet this was so regulated by the dictates of prudence, that it led only to such exertions as were good and useful. Although he often mentioned to his most intimate friends the trouble it

* Med. Comment. Dec. II. vol. iii. p. 394.

was necessary for him to bestow in combating the keenness of his passions; and although he frequently expressed his regret that he had not been able to overcome them, yet, after an intimate connexion for more than twenty years, I am unacquainted with even a single instance, in which they betrayed him into any irregularity of conduct. Passions thus regulated are rather objects of desire than of regret; for it is by these alone that the cool indifference of philosophy can be made to partake of the tender feelings of human nature.—In one word, Dr HOPES conduct through life exhibited, to every attentive and candid observer, a striking picture of an able philosopher, an amiable physician, a sincere friend, an affectionate parent, and a worthy man."

THE author of these pages had the advantage of attending Dr HOPES botanical lectures, and his practice as physician to the Royal Infirmary; and still remembers, with much pleasure, his excellent lectures on the physiology of vegetables, and his clear exposition of the LINNAEAN system of botanical arrangement. His humane and enlightened attention to the diseases of the patients un-

der his care in the Royal Infirmary, and his judicious prescriptions for curing or alleviating their disorders, were most exemplary and instructive. He was an ornament to the University and to his profession, and a model to his students most worthy of imitation.

Mr Smellie lived in great intimacy with the late Sir Alexander Dick of Prestonfield, Bart. a most respectable, worthy, and ingenious member of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, of which he was President for seven successive years. Mr Smellie was long in use to visit that gentleman at his country-house, about a mile from Edinburgh, every Saturday evening, where he remained till the Monday morning. This intimacy continued unabated during the life of Sir Alexander, who died in 1785, at the advanced age of eighty-two, in the full enjoyment of his faculties.

In giving a selection from the early correspondence which passed between Mr Smellie and several of his youthful literary friends, we labour under some difficulties, and find it impossible to reduce the letters into any sa-

tisfactory order or consecutive series. It has been formerly noticed, that a large portion of this early correspondence has perished, along with many other valuable papers that would have been highly useful to these Memoirs. Almost all the copies or draughts of his own letters which yet remain are without dates, and have no dockets of the persons for whom they were intended, or are only indistinctly marked by initials. The remaining original letters from several of his correspondents are either altogether undated, both as to time and place, or have only the day of the week expressed, omitting the month and year. And a great number of these are marked only by almost illegible initials, as if intended to prevent any third person from being able to ascertain who were their writers.

The correspondence which has been chosen as the commencement of the subsequent series, and which is known to have begun about the year 1759, when Mr Smellie was in his nineteenth year, particularly labours under all these difficulties and imperfections with regard to dates and regularity of series; and is, therefore, merely grouped as seemed best to agree with the subjects to

which they refer, without any anxious endeavours to reduce them to an absolutely unattainable chronological order. Where dates could be ascertained, or guessed at, these have been inserted or supplied in notes. It would perhaps have added to the interest of this early literary correspondence of Mr SMELLIE with some of the most respectable friends and companions of his youth, to have been enabled to indicate the names of the persons with whom it took place; which could have been easily done from internal evidence amounting almost to moral certainty: But as this could not be accomplished without a breach of delicacy, which there was reason to know or believe might be painful to the feelings of very worthy and respectable persons, we shall only say, that it does much credit to the heads and hearts of Mr SMELLIE and his young friends, and that we regret so very little of it now remains. Anxious alike to improve their minds, and to exercise their talents for composition and ratiocination on literary and scientific subjects, which then constituted their studies, they long carried on a free intercourse of epistolary disquisition, on every topic that occurred to them as worthy of be-

ing investigated. This correspondence appears to have been continued for many years; and from that portion of it which still remains, the following letters have been selected for insertion in this work; suppressing some whole letters, and a few passages in those now printed, which contained some slight unreserved freedoms that might have offended fastidious hypercriticism.

In this selection, the editor has anxiously endeavoured to direct his choice by what he conceived might have been the deliberate feelings of the parties themselves. Freedoms of discussion respecting persons, and circumstances, and opinions, may be indulged in with the strictest propriety in the unreserved intercourse of familiar and private converse and correspondence, which one or other of the parties might not incline to see laid open to the world by a third person, more especially in a publication of a miscellaneous nature.

No. XIV.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE, *from* * * * * * * *

DEAR SMELLIE,

I AM very happy you proposed a letter; though it was but by word of mouth, I understand you engage to answer, and I am satisfied to write on such conditions; for numerous as the divines may seem, I find but few of them who are willing to converse with an absent friend. You'll naturally expect that I should talk of the Society, and indeed your idea brings the other along; but some circumstances have created in me a disgust, a temporary one at least, for all society; and my reason for quitting the town so early, was to have leisure and practicable means of turning my ambition into another channel; to exchange the humour of speculating and speechifying for more grave theology, and the prospect of a general acquaintance, and being looked upon as something, for an acquaintance with the fathers and prophets, and becoming a country

parson. This, however, is a formidable change, and must be effected gradually. The leopard grows not spotless in an instant. A perfect concordance cannot be made by the first composer. The universal scope and latitude of an argument cannot be excogitated by the first inventor. Witness the structure of a watch, and the theory of circulation, as NEHEMIAH GREW hath it. Dr JENKINS has remarked of the Scripture, that whoever is in love with simplicity will find in the Gospel the plainest theory of salvation; lovers of the sublime are gratified in the Old Testament; those who take pleasure in the profound and mystical have much delectation in the number of the beast, in contemplating the scarlet whore, and in calculating the times and half times. "Thus are men of different geniuses, I say men of different humours, are thus attracted to the study of revelation." So sayeth Dr JENKINS.

I THOUGHT to have done much at botany this summer, and to have conversed you letter-ways upon that subject, with all other curious things; but every thing goes against

me. Here I have plenty of leisure hours, LINNAEUS, and a microscope. A lofty mountain on my front; on my right a long winding variegated *cleugh* *, with store of uncouth herbage; on my left a woody marsh and a very tolerable garden. But when I had brought a boxfull t'other morning to investigate, I found my notes of HOPES lectures were amissing. It is a little octavo, bound in marbled paper, with an explanation of the hard words. I describe it, because I suspect it has been left accidentally at the Professors, for I laid it out to bring over; so that if you happen to see him, it would do me a great favour to ask for it. The hard words discourage me, as I have no resource; but, could I recover it, you would have much delectation and brain-exercise in the vegetation of this corner. This is all I shall trouble you with for the present, till I see what size of letters you favour me with. Yours, &c.

P. S.—THE mite is a very hog-looking animalcule.

* Dell or glen.

No. XV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* * * * * * * * * *.

DEAR SIR, 1760 *.

YOU know that the great knack of being happy is to level ones mind to his present circumstances and situation in life. Could I hit that knack, my head I imagine would from thenceforth and for evermore be entirely evacuated of all schemes and projects, and *lunacism* †. But, till that blessed era arrive, I must eagerly plod and beat my hard-bound brains in order to elevate my situation to the height of my conceptions. This equipoise, you'll allow, is the very quintescence of sublunary enjoyment.

I HAVE no hopes of bettering my station either from law, physic, or divinity. Of

* The rest of the date is wanting in the copy preserved of this letter.

† This alludes to a project, to be afterwards mentioned, of a periodical work, under the title of the Man of the Moon.

course, I am under the fatal necessity of being metamorphosed into a stoick, or of being changed into a frantic lunatic *. I have nothing for it but to attempt something in the way of book-making. A poor shift indeed! If any thing better could be had, I might indeed continue to amuse myself with divers speculations; but doubt much if I would ever dream of publishing. I have no expectation from friends; providence and industry are my sole resources. I am now growing in years; my present occupation (corrector of the press) must ere long put out my eyes. Posts and pensions depend on the favour of the great, with whom I have neither acquaintance nor influence. Shall I therefore despair? No! I'll rather enjoy the small portion I presently possess, and, as much as I am able, banish all gloomy and splenetic imaginations. Novelty is the only instrument to be wielded by an obscure and indigent hand. To work upon the weaknesses of men is mean, but often profitable. From what has been said, it may be inferred that the Man of the Moon, if properly tutored, may possibly prove a pa-

* This has the same allusion.

nacea to a cancerous purse. Let us, therefore, fall to work with spirit, advancing by cautious steps and slow.

SATURDAY last I delivered my Tangible Theory to the great astonishment of the wondering Newtonians. I am not satisfied with the execution. It is forty minutes long. To give my theory the finishing stroke, I was obliged to prove that the human soul is neither composed of fire, earth, air, or water, but a species of matter the next remove from these substances. I cannot propose to give you any idea either of the arguments or method of this very eccentric performance; but I hope in a month or two at farthest, you and I shall indulge our risible faculties with it in my Grotto del Cane *.

I PROPOSE in a day or two to compose No. I. of Lunacism. My plan is not yet fully digested; but, in general, it will consist of the *Mans* journey; the place of his present residence; his good intentions towards his dear Edinburgh; his promise of tarrying with them for a season, provided they receive

* Alluding to the confined air of his correcting-room.

him hospitably; a modest hint at the second number, &c. Between the acts, the general plan of the work, time of publication, invitation to ingenious scribblers, &c. Send me *notulae quaedam*, or perhaps a new plan for the first number by next week. In the mean time, I shall go on to write, look out, *in*, &c. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—I HAVE begun; a few pages are finished. My style and manner are very grave and philosophical; and the way I am going on will, I judge, excite curiosity, no inconsiderable branch of book-politics.

THE allusions in the foregoing letter to Lunacism refer to a periodical work which seems to have been projected between Mr SMELLIE and some of his friends; but which project was never executed. Two numbers only of this Man of the Moon were ever written, both of them by Mr SMELLIE. The same letter alludes to a society of young men, then just formed, under the name of the Newtonian Society, of which frequent mention is made in Mr SMELLIES letters, and

which seems to have been a favourite with him.

No. XVI.

To Mr William Smellie *from* * * * * * *.

Dear Smellie,

When I am busy, I shall take the liberty to be brief. The oration, I can see, is not altogether such as you would have sent from your own hands to the press, though I did not think you had such a turn for declamation. You seem to me rather formed for ingenuity, sentiment, thought, and speculation; qualities of infinitely more consequence to the Man of the Moon. The name likes me; only we must take great care it be not blown up. The name itself will suggest several anecdotes;—the mans history, and some particulars of his country at times;—intelligence from thence, &c. I am utterly and altogether of opinion now that no more should be admitted. I think, if I have any genius for composition, next to sermonizing, these sort of essays have a number of hints

which may be stretched into them. However, as I am so soon to appear in a character which I cannot disguise, you will easily perceive that this will occupy my first attention. It is for this, as well as some other reasons, that I am for delaying the commencement of the work a year or two. A publication, from which we may reasonably expect any honour, must be the fruit of time, and thought, and corrections. The longer we delay it, and the more we see of the world, we shall have the more essays, and the more stamina of essays, and the plan more perfect. It is easy to see how impossible it is for me, otherwise engaged, to knock out things extempore worthy of the press, worthy the perusal of those of better understandings; for it is chiefly to such that I would wish it written. In the mean time let us hold the secret profound.

I INTEND immediately beginning, as an exercise, to read two or three papers of the Spectator every day; to write down any sentiment that strikes me; to pay particular attention to the style and manner; and, if possible, to find out what it is that has made them please so much. In the course of this

exercise I propose to go through the best periodical pieces; SWIFT, particularly for his style and manner, as also BOLINBROKE. I believe it is only in that way we can arrive at perfect purity; and you very well know how vast a recommendation style is now-a-days. If you take the same method with the Spectator, it will be an amusement to see what thoughts have appeared to each most deserving. I have some thoughts on the proper manner of cultivating a genius, which will be a fit supplement to yours on the Original Destinations. One on the way in which men form judgments of characters. One on narrow mindedness. One against SMITHS Theory. One on the knowledge of good and evil. One or two on reserve. Have I six yet? But it is no matter; there is not a word of them made yet, only the thoughts. Our best way will be to submit to one anothers correction every two months or so, and that will be to carry on the work. My principal difficulty is, that they will run away with all my best preachment thoughts. Yours, &c.

No. XVII.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from** * * * * * * *.

DEAR SMELLIE,

I WRITE you this week for two reasons; *first*, to see if you have made any farther enquiry or determination about the Midwifery, which I am anxious for this winter, although I shall be busy enough; and it is one great reason why I would wish to be with you, that we might attend the class and deliveries together. You will repent if you let slip a winter without being at any thing improving. I fancy, by our being together, we may save as much as will bring obstetrication to a moderate amount.

THE *second* reason of this weeks letter is to enquire if you know any thing of snails. I have been cutting open one or two of them, which put a thought into my head of our making a discourse upon them in conjunction: Each of us to take a part or parts to describe or demonstrate. I know not if any

thing curious is told of them by naturalists; but you can have a guess by looking into some dictionary of Arts and Sciences. We could spoilzie* that, and add what occurred. It is a very vulgar animal; and one would wish to know something of it. The discourse should contain their whole history, so far as we could gather it,—what has been said of them,—their season,—habitation,—food,—generation,—anatomy;—and, first of all, their class, order, genus, and species, according to LINNAEUS, in order to confound the hearers with a parcel of hard-sounding words.

I CONCLUDE this letter with an advice, which, if you practise it not already, may prove of use. That is, to have always a small paper book in your pocket, in which to jot down in short hand any thought which comes into your head, however wild or extravagant. There is great pleasure in reading these over at another time; and I persuade myself you must be conscious of having often had some thoughts which you would fain recover. I have derived some

* *i. e.* adopt.

advantage from this practice; and think every scheme for promoting thought, study, and, above all things, virtue, should be communicated; for I am not yet so high flown in Calvinism, but that I would gladly hear and practise every method, even technical, to eradicate a passion, or to subdue an evil habit. Yours, &c.

No. XVIII.

Mr William Smellie *to* * * * * * * * *.

Dear Sir,

You have now fallen upon a most effectual method of squeezing a weekly word from me. I am afraid, however, that I shall not be able to stretch it the length of a folio. As to Midwifery*, I doubt much that this will bear too hard on my poor purse. Five guineas is a great oath to swear by. Besides, as I am ignorant of the hour of at-

* On this subject some observations follow in the original, which are here omitted as irrelevant in a miscellaneous work, though no way improper in the free intercourse of philosophical and familiar correspondence.

tendance, I can say nothing definitive on the matter. No man is more welcome to tarry with me for a season than you are, provided you can conform yourself to my lodgings and humours. Every man, you know, has his own draff-pock *; yet, like all fools, I have the vanity to think myself, upon the whole, a good natured sort of fellow.

Quer.—What is the most prudent and most practicable course to be taken, when a man is in love to the very back-bone, but has unluckily a taste which can by no means keep pace with his purse? Again, supposing the passion reciprocal, whether is it better, as the females term it, to run all risks, or to drag out years in painful expectation? I leave the farther prosecution of this and all other matters to a future opportunity. Yours, &c.

William Smellie.

P. S.—Expect my thoughts on snails against this day se'enight. Excuse my brevity and dullness; all this is after reading

* This Scoticism means, that every one has his own peculiar weak part.

200 pages of confounded law. You have made much the better choice. I shall be plaguily out with you, if I get not a whauker tomorrow.

No. XIX.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* *******.

DEAR SMELLIE,

I have often thought that nature had formed you for giving instruction and reproof; and have therefore often wished you of that profession which stands most in need of these accomplishments. A little systematic knowledge is sufficient, where the more necessary and more useful accomplishments are in perfection. A few years would answer the demands of theology; if, instead of your twelve hours daily at musty lawisms*, you spent four with some fat pupil, and the other eight on theology. Mr MICHAEL GREENLAW, I am told, was forty before he began his Latin, and now makes a first rate figure among the

* In allusion to his employment of reading and correcting law papers.

Fife clergy. This is a matter, I believe, you have pondered already; though I know not if you ever determined finally.

Give you thanks for the stanzas of Young. They are very much in the style of his Night Thoughts, though rhyme does not appear to be his chief fort. I have not thoroughly studied the *waters* yet; but hope, from the notion I have got with one reading, and with the help of Johnson, that I shall thoroughly understand it. I have no queries with which to trouble you for next letter, except what you'll find in my last weeks little quarto.

Yours, &c.

Query.—Why does the sense of pain make us hold in our breath forcibly?

No. XX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* * * * * * *.

DEAR SIR,

As to snails, there is a tolerable account of them in the *Spectacle de la Nature*. A very handsome discourse might be made of them. They have a very peculiar method of generating; which take in the precise words of the said *Spectacle*. "When mutually inclined to propagation, one of them shoots a little arrow or dart at the other, which has four minute wings or sharp edges; and this dart either sticks in the other, or falls down by his side after a slight penetration. Upon this, another arrow is discharged in return at the aggressor. This pretty affray is soon adjusted, and a strict union immediately ensues. The substance of the dart or arrow resembles a piece of horn; and the reptiles are plentifully provided with these weapons at the season when the amorous engagements take

place*." This grave author asserts that all snails are hermaphrodites. But, *pace tanti viri*, they are capable both of impregnating and of receiving impregnation from each other. The law of retaliation is the law of snails: I would therefore term all this order of animals, not hermaphrodites, because they cannot impregnate themselves as flowers do, but retaliators, because they mutually impregnate one another. O search, search diligently for one of these pretty little arrows. A propos, should not snails be called *Cupids*, as they wound the amorous heart with arrows? Your *Sheugh*†, in a dewy morning, is a most excellent place for the exploration of snails.

Your query about holding in the breath upon the attack or idea of pain remains to be answered. This, like all other instincts, is a very wise provision in nature. The detention of the air blows up and fortifies the body against external injuries. Sit on a chair and lay your leg carelessly on a stool, and a very

* See this strange explication of the amatory warfare of snails more clearly and truly described in a subsequent letter, on the information of Professor John Hope, M. D.

† Referring to some *dell*, or hollow place, in the neighbourhood of his friends residence.

small stroke will break it in twain. Apprize you of the danger,—hold in your breath, or, which is the same thing, brace the muscles of your body, and double the stroke will do you no harm. This, I am sufficiently aware, is only the effect; and I imagine the following to be the cause. Pain, or the apprehension of it, powerfully stimulates the mind instantly to use her endeavours to evade the injury. For this purpose, she propels an unusual quantity of the nervous fluid, or whatever you please to call it, towards the particular part affected, in order to strengthen the fibres and to resist the force applied. Wholly intent upon this single object, she, for a moment, neglects or suspends some of the more common functions of her economy. The natural consequence is that, the mouth being shut, the air previously existing in the lungs is allowed to remain there until the uneasy sensation which it occasions obliges her to throw it out. So wonderful are the operations of nature, that this very oversight of the sentient principle has a very beneficial effect; for, particularly if the pain exist in any part below the head, the blowing up of the lungs acts upon the nerves, in some measure, as a ligature, interrupting, in a degree, the progress of the pain

to the glandulæ pinealis. In fact you'll find, if you chuse to try the experiment, that detaining the air in the lungs greatly abates and blunts the painful sensations. Again, slacken the body, or allow the air to get out, and the uneasiness will be greatly increased. Tell me if this be any way satisfactory*.

The Dean says, Praise is like ambergris; draw a little of it gently by your nose, and the odour is very agreeable; suspend your head over a great quantity, and you will be struck down with the stench. I liken praise to a rotten egg. Its colour and figure are pleasant to the eye; but open the shell, and the object becomes loathsome both to the optic and olfactory nerves. In your last letter you have not only broken the integuments, but have daubed my nose with the contents, even unto the yolk. Perhaps you'll see no manner of similitude in this simile.

* The great error of the students of the Edinburgh University, in their societies for mutual improvement, long was the perpetual search for theories and hypotheses, which they mistook for science. Our young philosopher here falls into the common error of his time, and advances an ephemeral hypothesis of the day, under the idea that he was explaining the cause of a phenomenon.

No. XXI.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* * * * * * *.

DEAR SMELLIE,

YOUR account of the stoppage of the breath is extremely satisfactory; only I think the stoppage of the trachea is not the effect of neglect, but rather of set purpose for the effects which you have very well explained. There is a query or two in your penult letter, for which I have at present little other answer than what is commonly given. "If a man is in love to the very back-bone, and has got a taste which will by no means keep pace with his purse?"—In such a case, I should think that the emptiness of his purse will prevent the indulgence of his extravagant taste.—Again, "If the passion is reciprocal, whether is it better to run all risks, or to drag out years in painful expectation?" —I say neither is the better way—For to run all risks is a very female-like proposal—altogether extravagant.—It is repeating in miniature the deed of EVE and ADAM; risk-

ing the happiness of yourselves and your posterity on a very perilous adventure.—Again, to drag out years in tedious expectation, is to throw away the man, to extinguish your little spark of divinity, and say to every one, "I am a fool." What then should be done, but divert the current of the soul into another channel. The ways of doing this, you know better than I can tell. And now I think I have noticed every thing but the *queritur* of that *admodum reverendus* hoary-barbed sage; the which, if it bears the ensample of his noddles furniture, my thoughts enter not into their secret. Yours, &c.

No. XXII.

To Mr William Smellie *from* * * * * *,

Dear Smellie,

I received your Christmas pye in its season, and shall be glad you lay in for some future Christmas. My only thought on it is, that people have instituted the change of the year as a time of merriment to dispel the gloomy reflections of old age and death, which

it naturally tends to suggest. In like manner the feast of ingatherings, to prevent moralizing on the fall of the leaf. *Simili modo*, the military, who are daily threatened with destruction, are your only men of perpetual gaiety, who complete the parallelogram of dissipation. "Not a cranny crank or crevice of his crazed cranium, but is crammed and crayoned with a crowd of crusts, crumbs, and crudities, of creekers cribbage and cricket, crabbed crambos and craven crapulency." I believe I have got you to the dictionary with my c's. Well, we should always be learning something; for, as the pick-pocket in the play says, Every lanes end, every shop, church, session, hanging, yield a careful man work. Be not, therefore, unthrifty to your knowledge, as the same pocket-picking pedlar says, but note down and pocket up every thing that can possibly serve the purpose; for it is not in the way of study, but in the way of the world, that materials are to be sought for. Be more than ever on the look-out for speculations, and on the look-in too. It is wonderful how much one may gather out of himself by a long, and close, and nice attention. I am afraid we shall not be so soon at work as this

time twelvemonths. Materials come in but slowly; and it is really a matter of much time and thought to compose in such a style and manner as not to be ashamed of it. ADDISON had travelled, and STEELE had been in the army, before they published; but in this our progress will determine us. I have one piece made, but not reduced to style or order, and is at present only in the form of a club discourse. I am very happy you are yoked with the amotary passion, and very impatient to peruse your lucubration; you must search the matter very deep, if I have not the honour to subjoin *notulæ quædam:* But what have you to do with anxious love? Away! it is not for men of your kidney. Persevere and scrutinize the passion; but you have no right to meddle with anxious love. Yours, &c.

No. XXIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* * * * * * *.

DEAR SIR,

YOU are pleased to observe, that I only answered the first page of your last. In re-

turn, you have sharply hit me off, by taking notice of only one single query out of a dozen. No more quartos; I hate them abominably. Let folio be the word! I scorn to make reprisals; and I shall, therefore, give you my thoughts upon hard and soft water, than which I know not a more difficult theme *. In order to this investigation, I must call in the assistance of a few chemical terms, which I shall endeavour to bring down to the level of your slender capacity †.

Waters are divided into pure and impure; or, in other words, into such as are, and such as are not, impregnated with fossile substances. It is from hence easy to conceive, that those waters which run along hard channels,

* This, it is to be noticed, was in the infancy of chemistry; before our great Black gave the *first* example of accurate analysis, so excellently followed by the celebrated Bergman and Scheel; and, in consequence of the verification of the discoveries of Black, Cavendish, and Priestley, the illustrious and unfortunate Lavoisier in a manner created a new science, out of a chaotic mass of ancient nonsense and modern confusion.

† Our readers will be pleased to notice, that this expression is in the unreserved freedom of friendly correspondence; and that his correspondent had declared his unacquaintance with such principles of chemistry as were then known, at that time almost exclusively attended to by medical students.

or trickle through the hollow cavities of rocks, must of necessity be more free from pollution than those which sink down into the bowels of the earth, and there prostitute themselves to every strumpet they grapple with in their dark and oblique courses. It is the impregnated waters alone that obstruct the washing of clouts and the scraping of beards, by refusing to combine with soap.

Selenite is a saline substance very universally diffused through the different strata of the earth, and is composed of a calcareous earth combined with vitriolic acid *. It is a distinguishing property of all the acids to unite with alkalis, as with pot-ashes for instance, preferably to any other substance; insomuch that if an acid is applied to any other body containing an alkali, it will extract that alkali, and decompose the subject with which the alkali was formerly joined, provided it was not coupled with an acid of as great strength as the one which was ap-

* This was the ordinary, but erroneous, hypothesis of the times, which conceived the earthy impregnation in hard waters to be selenite, or sulphat of lime: now well known to be supercarbonat of lime.

plied. Hard water is found, by actual experiment, to be impregnated with selenitic salt; *i. e.* calcareous earth combined with vitriolic acid. Thus far concerning its composition. To account for the effect is, I know, the thing you gape for. O! what a mortifying virtue is humility. You must exercise patience, till I give you sufficient legs to walk upon.

Although alkalis attract acids preferably to all other substances, yet they unite in a slighter degree with the oil or fat of animals. Soap is a body compounded of alkali and fat. Now is the mist dispelled and the way clear. When soap is attempted to be dissolved in hard water, which, as I said before, is always impregnated with the vitriolic, the strongest of all acids, the consequence must infallibly be a decomposition of the soap; or, to speak more intelligibly, the acid which is dispersed through the hard water attracts and unites with the alkali which is contained in the soap, and leaves the tallow floating in the form of globules upon the surface of the water. Do you understand this solution of your query? To a mere tyro in chemisty it would be perfectly obvious. Set your thoughts upon che-

mistry next winter; 'tis a curious science, and will unfold many of the mysteries of creation, and enable you to read books of all sizes and complexions.

I AM no retailer of news. I sup with Dr BUCHAN this evening; he came to town last night all bedawbed with lace.—Leith, 2d July. A poor woman had her son killed dead by the kick of a horse.—Ditto, 17th July. This same poor woman had two daughters drowned in the sea.—SANDY DRUMMOND, student of physic, is very bad of a fever, occasioned by the accidental stroke of a club given by GOLD, his friend and constant companion. Is this the kind of news you itch for? *Perge domine.* Some months ago, as Dr BUCHAN was squeezing a little small-pox matter into a phial, in order to innoculate some children, happening at the same time to have a slight scratch on one of his fingers, he was unluckily caught in the snare which he had set for the innocent babies.

Now, to gratify you with a few stanzas from Dr YOUNG's Resignation*. The inten-

* This poem was then printing by MURRAY & COCHRANE, when Mr SMELLIE was their corrector; so that he had the opportunity

tion of this poem is to excite a spirit of resignation in the breast of Lady Anson, whose husband was lately swallowed by the all-devouring œsophagus of the *Grave*. Speaking of old age, he says—

"And am I not," &c.

And, to the same purpose, in another place,

"Cruel to spare, &c,

Again,

"Thus have I written," &c.

You are a very hard man! I am obliged to brood ten or twelve hours a day over dry musty law papers. How, then, can you expect more from me than you commonly receive? Like the horse-leech, your only cry is, Give! Give! I return the compliment in the same words, Give! Give! Write me as often as you can; and I shall answer as fully as my time and circumstances will admit of.

of transmitting the specimens to his friend before the work was published. It has been thought sufficient to indicate the passages sent of this well known performance, without transcribing the entire quotations.

I LEAVE the subject of your next to your own imagination; but remember I will have nothing to do with 4to pages. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. XXIV.

To WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* * * * * * *.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

YOUR first page made me serious, and well nigh cured me of lunacy at least for this year and half. My humour is far from being so good as expectation. Nothing pleases me in the way of composition which is not stretched to the highest tone of metaphysics, and squeezed into the periphery of a nut-shell:—The more I polish, the more metaphysical, and the more concise, the more I approve; characters which do not suit the vulgar noddle. In a year and a half more, however, I shall be ready to try any way of it. The number will do very well:—some hints at the return of peace, and a return of speculation. If some extraordinary piece could be thought of, different from that of the authors history, it

would be more out of the common road; and his history and intentions could come in at some second or third number, at the request of some pretended letter, asking "Who the devil are you?"

SERIOUSLY I think you should point either to physic or divinity. To enlist yourself, at least, is an easy matter. A charge is not indeed a great prospect; but it is the most easily obtained, and affords the most leisure. In medicine, too, every one has his chance, and merit goes a great way. The best way of trusting to Providence is to point at something. Do you ever hear of Dr BUCHAN, or any other of our acquaintance? Did you inquire after poor STRACHAN? I am more than apprehensive he has paid the debt of nature.

I WISH much to see your discourse. I hope to make one, by way of supplement, which yours will suggest. I shall write more fully soon.

No. XXV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* * * * * * .

DEAR SIR,

I send you this with no other intention but to keep up the weekly correspondence. SOMERVILLE and COCKBURN threaten to visit you on Saturday next. If you do not feed them high, and bung them with strong ale and whiskey, they will not care a fig for your conversation. *O tempora! O mores!* During their stay, keep a strict eye on *Somebody*. My advice to you, however, is, to starve them miserably; *i. e.* give them nothing but pease-scones* to their guts, and let them drink of the brook that runneth in the way.

Query.—May not a man who never sins but from an unavoidable necessity, either of na-

* A species of homely fare, common in some of the country districts of Scotland, made of pease-meal, kneaded up with water and salt, and baked in thin cakes on a heated iron plate called a girdle.

ture or constitution, be properly said to be perfectly innocent; and, in consequence of this, must not such a man be entitled to all the rewards due to virtue*. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—Don't *score* your queriturs so unmercifully; I can scarcely read your last: Farthermore, to avoid the same inconvenience, write your letters in such a manner that the sealing may not overlard the words.

No. XXVI.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* *******.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

My method in this letter shall be, first to answer a question, and then to ask one.

1. THE question to be answered is, "May not a man who never sins but from an una-

* This is a mere juvenile and untenable idea, thrown out to elicit an answer from his learned friend, and to keep up the ball of improving correspondence.

voidable necessity, either of nature or constitution, be properly said to be perfectly innocent; and, of consequence, entitled to the rewards due to virtue?"

Ans.—A man who sins, from any cause whatever, cannot be said to be perfectly innocent; because sin is the transgression of a law, which is always connected with the notion of guilt; and the very nature of a law infers some penalty or sanction. Transgression and guilt imply punishment. This answers the second part of your question: I speak as a heathen; but you had certainly an immediate eye to Christianity; and in that view it may be answered in the affirmative; if we attempt the practice of every virtue to the utmost of our power; if we indulge ourselves wilfully in no known sin, then may we find acceptance, but only through a Mediator, and only by faith in him. This is the very meaning of his dying for our offences,—to conciliate the just and mighty God to our imperfect services,—to procure an entrance for us, notwithstanding our defects, and notwithstanding the wilful sins we may have formerly been guilty of.

2. I once before questioned you concerning the effects of thunder on the animal, and now do I want to learn of its effects on the potable creation. Two-penny*, and strong ale, and, for what I know, all sorts of malt liquors, are said to be killed dead by a storm of thunder. *Query.* How is that effect produced? Wherefore does it affect *all* ales, when only an *antrin*† animal is destroyed? Is there any means of preventing it? Does thunder affect any other liquors besides those made from malt? Again, what are the principles of life in two-penny? How is its natural death effected? And are there any means of resuscitation? Yours, &c.

The following letter to a friend, of which the remaining copy is entirely without date,

* Two-penny *was* a favourite potation at Edinburgh in former days: it was a mild, brisk malt liquor, or table beer; named either from its price of two-pence the Scots pint, nearly half an English wine gallon, or from a tax paid to the City of Edinburgh by the brewer of two Scots pennies, each equal to one twelfth of a penny Sterling, on each Scots pint of the liquor. The prodigious increase of the Excise on brewing has banished this economical, wholesome, and exhilarating liquor from Edinburgh, forcing the labouring people to regale themselves on destructive ardent spirits.

† *Antrin* is a Scots word signifying occasional or chance.

commences with the subject then in agitation about the proposed change of his profession, and seems to have been written between the 1759, when he became corrector to MURRAY and COCHRANE, and the 1763, when he married. Soon leaving, however, the incipient topic about his entering into the clerical profession, it discusses some philosophical subjects upon which his friend appears to have consulted him, and narrates the circumstances of an interview between our young philosophical journeyman printer and Dr JOHN Hope, then Professor of Botany in the University of Edinburgh.

No. XXVII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* * * * * *.

DEAR SIR, *No date.*

SINCE you will have me to wear sables, I must say that, if I had no other earthly objection to the sacred function, I could not answer for it to my conscience. My ideas of

the virtues and endowments which I judge indispensibly necessary to the constitution of a clergyman run so very high, that my heart flatly tells me I am both unqualified and unworthy of that honourable but much abused office.

* * * * * * * * * * *

In compliance with your demands, I shall relate an anecdote concerning the behaviour of Dr Hope, which I am certain will not entertain you half so much as it surprised myself. The occasion of it was this. Garland asked a sight of my discourses on Vegetation and Generation; and, after reading them, he shewed them to the Doctor. Some days after this I accidentally encountered with the Doctor at the Cross *. The usual compliments being over, and our hats mutually replaced, he told me that he had seen my discourses, and was

* The *Cross* is a central situation in the main street of the old city of Edinburgh, where the inhabitants used long to resort at a fixed hour for the purposes of business and ordinary intercourse. The former part of this still exists, especially on Wednesday, the market-day: But, from the vast modern extension of the new city, the latter is now divided among numerous coffee-houses, reading-rooms, and various fashionable lounges.

pleased with them. He next asked me if I had purchased the Systema Naturæ? When I replied in the negative, he said there was not a single copy to be had in Edinburgh, but that he designed to lay hold of the first that came to this country, and to make me a present of it, adding, that he thought he could not dispose of it to better purpose. Thanks being given, &c. he desired me to call upon him at eight o'clock. The appointment was faithfully kept on both sides. We discoursed about an hour on plants, insects, chemistry, and other topics. I took an opportunity to ask him about the arrows *. He entirely satisfied me upon that head, that the snails did not throw them out of their bodies, as the fluttering Monsieur observed; but that the arrows were merely thin membranous bodies situate somewhere about their genitalia, which they invariably and reciprocally erected and struck each other with when excited by the passion of propagation. You may now in-

* This refers to some crude notions about the sexual intercourse of snails, which his correspondent had requested Mr SMELLIE to explain, and which will be found elucidated in one of his letters. These, and many other of the *vermes*, are now known to be androgynous; and the phenomenon mentioned in the text is in reality a reciprocation of active and passive mutual impregnation.

spect, and probably discover, this mysterious little machine. We next supped and drank wine. After this we went to another room, and read over my discourse on Vegetation. He started several difficulties, some of which were the very remarks you made in the society; and I removed them as well as might be. After breaking a few rotten eggs, or, if you chuse your simile, after thrusting a few squamous snails into my hand *, he concluded with assuring me, that he would use his utmost influence to put me into a situation that should be more grateful to my taste than conning over insipid *lawisms* †; and, in the interim, offered me the full use of his library. I have a double view in telling this story; 1. To shew that there is such a thing as disinterested benevolence in the world, bad as it is; and, 2. To tell you, what you know sufficiently already, that vanity lurks in a secret corner of my little heart. When I first began to imagine myself superior to

* Certain quaint expressions, meaning praise or compliments.

† Alluding to his employment of Corrector of the press, where he had a great number of law papers to read and correct.

scriveners *, I then felt vanity springing up apace in my mind. Although I have got some very humbling strokes, from observing the genius and ability of others, whom I know to be more ingenious, more learned, and more wise than myself; yet I confess this passion is far from being totally mastered. For some time past, however, I have every day sunk a degree in my own esteem. How to overcome, or where to fix the lawful bounds of vanity, if any such there are, may be a very proper enquiry for your next weeks epistle.

As to the medicinal virtues of snails; not having a dispensatory by me, I can only say this much, that I know they are frequently prescribed, and particularly in consumptions. LINNAEUS ranks snails among the *Vermes*, which is the *sixth* order of his *Regnum Animale;* whereas serpents make the *first* order of his third class of animals, viz. the *Amphibia* †.

* Probably referring to the apprentices and clerks to the writers or attornies, who might consider themselves as superior beings to such of their former school fellows as were in mechanical employments.

† There is an inaccuracy, or rather loose want of precision here, by confounding in careless epistolary writing the difference between

On Friday last Mr Gardiner* read a very masterly paper in the Botany class on the method of arranging natural bodies. The subject was dry, but was made very agreeable by handsome composition and the gentlemans conspicuous modesty. If you have not seen Campbell on Miracles †, I shall supply that defect if it can be conveyed to you with safety. Two months hence, I intend to advertise a meeting of the society, if no material objection is started.

My spirits are at present very low, although the sun shines, and the sky is serene. I am frequently out of humour both with myself and the world. I am not old; yet am I sometimes tired with the insipid uniformity and dull similarity of entertainments, which

classes and orders; but of which Mr Smellie was perfectly aware. Vermes ought to have been called the sixth *class* instead of *order*.

* This is believed to have been the late worthy and ingenious Dr John Gardiner, physician in Edinburgh, the author of the Animal Economy and other excellent works.

† There is a remarkably neat abridged account of the arguments used by Hume against the authenticity of miracles, and the refutation of these by Campbell, written by Mr Smellie for the first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, which will be found in the sequel.

turns round and round and round, without presenting any thing new. Forgive, therefore, the brevity and flatness of this letter. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. XXVIII.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* * * * * *.

DEAR SMELLIE,

I AM engaged in quite a different scene from what I had figured to myself. So much with company, and so much in study, will considerably retrench my correspondence hours. My former musing contemplative folios are now exchanged for closets and conversation; so that I cannot propose such length in speculation as heretofore. We may, however, and must, once a fortnight, hear from each other, though it should not be always in folio, or always in the depths of speculation.

I WAS thinking a little more of the occasional Speculator, and am very much in love

with him; only it must be deferred longer than the time you were mentioning, at least till ten or twelve approved ones are in readiness; six or eight at the very least; and that might be against next winter, if there were a third. The style, you know, must be correct, and the whole composition polished, to make it any way respectable, or to seem the work of genius.

I AM in great expectation from your Titulating Theory, and long to feast my imagination with it. In the mean time, if you will have a queritur, think if you can demonstrate a climax in the senses, if you can perceive them running into each other, and blending together, like most other objects of nature, and if in any case it is difficult to determine their boundaries, or to assign every perception to its proper sense. Yours, &c.

THE following letter to one of Mr SMELLIES friends has no date, but may probably belong to the same period with those which have gone before; and evidently refers to several projects for essays in a periodical paper which he and this person intended to have published in

conjunction, but which project was never executed.

No. XXIX.

Mr William Smellie *to* * * * * * *.

Dear Sir, *No date.*

I was both surprised and disappointed at your delay. Crowds of youngsters daily harrass me with impertinent questions. Is ***** dead? Surely he must be dead or mad? I replied that the alternative was unjust; for that you were neither dead nor mad, but that some strange humour had overflowed the banks, and you had sunk even as a stone*; *J. Glen!*

The Speculator† must be christened anew. A trifling club is set up under the

* This allusion and apostrophe to J. Glen is obscure, but may refer to some well known cant of the day.

† From this it would appear, that the name of their intended periodical work had been changed from the Man of the Moon to the Speculator. It is curious to notice this contemptuous opinion of the Speculative Society, which has been eminently useful and

name of the Speculative Society. This reason is very conclusive. Whatever designation he may obtain, he has much of my good graces, and henceforth I design to make him my bosom friend. I heartily approve of your plan, but a dozen handsome essays are sufficiently few. I can think of no third hand, neither do I wish for a third; provided we two could execute it properly; one third of the profits would considerably diminish our gain. I have calculated the expence, and find that 500 copies, sold at twopence each, produce two pounds clear, allowing for every possible circumstance. The worst that can happen is the loss of twenty shillings. What a trifle! what a *nothing* is this! compared to the cash, the honour, and, above all, the immense fun we shall be regaled with at the expence of good Mr Innominatus *. What think you of the Ranger,—the Illuminator,—the Lustrator,—the Man of the Moon,—the Disquisitor,—the Contemplator,—the Tutor,—the Guide,—the Director,—the Instructor,—&c. &c.?

has subsisted in vigour ever since. Mr SMELLIE was then only a little more removed from a boy than the original institutors of that Society, yet chuses to look down upon them as triflers.

* This seems to have been the intended name of the concealed author of the proposed periodical paper.

I CANNOT engage to do any thing for some time. I have, however, jotted down the heads of an essay on Flesh-eating; for which I have a peculiar theory, whereby I imagine that I can justify the conduct of Providence in permitting one animal to prey upon another. Dr WALLACE, the last writer who mentions this subject, has given it up as inexplicable. Another on Genius, in which I propose to investigate the cause why one genius differs from another. A third, a Physico-Theological Essay on Botany. A fourth, on the Nature of Sleep, Dreaming, &c. *.— A fifth, on Vulgar Ignorance; chiefly setting vulgar errors in a ridiculous point of view.— A sixth, on Jealousy; mostly founded on observation. I hope you are not idle. Tell me which of the half dozen I should try my hand upon first. I have not yet begun my discourse on Shaking of Hands: It will be difficult; and I dread the execution.

I WAS lately appointed by the Society of Masons to give them a discourse on Charity. I hammered it over in my old way, on

* This Essay is published in the second volume of the Philosophy of Natural History by Mr SMELLIE.

Monday se'enight. I had the solatium of a very long and very loud clap. I wrought this same essay entirely out of my own imagination, without turning over a single leaf of a book. *Hall* HUNTER * heard it; so that if you chuse to learn any thing farther of it, you may consult him. It has been shewn to several persons of sense, and among the rest to no less a man than the Earl of LEVEN! Wonderful! I am strongly solicited to print it for the amusement of the town †. I wish you had been here, as your opinion would have had considerable weight; but I believe I shall not expose myself to the view of the public. One thing I lament: It would have been a tolerable morsel for Mr Innominatus.

THE Society met ten days ago. We had a meeting of seven good fellows, all high mettled, having their heads full of Newtonianism.

* The Rev. Dr HENRY HUNTER, late of London-wall, who has been already mentioned.

† This essay on Charity was printed, and 2,500 copies of it are said to have been speedily sold. No printed copy of this essay can now be found; but a manuscript essay on the same subject, in Mr SMELLIES hand-writing, still remains, and is supposed to have been the original here alluded to.

WRITE me by next carrier, under the penalty of anathematization. The carriers will call punctually enough at MILLERS shop. I have not yet thought of your climax: But it has long been a fancy of mine that there is but one capital passion, and that all the rest are but mere cringing dependants. I shall think of this afterwards more at length.

I AM again entirely buried in law-fustian *; I pray you, therefore, from mere humanity, to give me a reviving draught as frequently as possible. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—I HAVE wrote down *P. S.* but have nothing to tack to its tail.

FROM these and many similar letters, it is obvious that Mr SMELLIE had become discontented at his professional situation, as dooming him to what he considered mechanical drudgery, hopeless of bettering his condition in life, and precluded from the enjoy-

* Alluding to the dull employment of revising and correcting the printed law arguments which are presented to the Court of Session in all causes.

ment of literary ease. His companions and friends, falling into his views of the matter, appear to have fostered this discontent, by proposals of altering his condition into one of the learned professions; and the following is evidently an answer to a letter on this topic from one of his early friends. It was written in the year 1763, but the remainder of the date is omitted in the copy. It opens a new scene, however, in his life, matrimony, on which he entered soon afterwards.

No. XXX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* * * * * *.

DEAR SIR, 1763.

To study physic to the bottom, as I would wish, is perfectly impracticable. A penury of precious metal is indeed the principal cause of this impracticability. I formerly expressed my difficulties as to divinity. Were I to prosecute that study, I could not with a clear conscience declare, as I am told every minister at his ordination is obliged to do, that my sole motive for assuming the sacred

office was purely to advance the glory of God, and to promote the eternal interests of mankind. How amiable the principle! But, alas! the highest stretch of vanity, and the most enthusiastic self-approbation, will never be able to make me dream that I am possessed of such a God-like heart. The converse of this idea is shocking and nauseous; therefore let me speedily banish it. Besides, bating all scruples of this nature, supposing I had got a charge, read Pictet, commenced preacher, held forth in all the pulpits in Edinburgh, and ten miles round; at last shut up in a country cloister with L. 60 or L. 70 a-year, excluded from all rational converse with mankind, I mean the ingenious part of the species, afraid to speak my genuine sentiments of men and things, and, to crown all, perhaps hated by nine-tenths of the parish. I put the case to yourself. What satisfaction, what pleasure, what society, what mighty profit, can such an employment afford to a man of my kidney? Even supposing I had the good fortune to be admired by some; but the supposition is indeed extremely absurd; for however elegant the composition, yet elocution, O sovereign elocution! thou canst never flow from Smellies

awkward tongue; by consulting my own imagination, I learn that I have a passion for novelty, and for straining things to their utmost pitch: A very dangerous and very unpopular turn for a clergyman!

I SHALL now inform you of an affair which will surprise you more than if I had turned a worshipper of MAHOMET. Nature has deemed me to be a violent lover for some years past. Many expedients have I tried to overcome the passion; vain and unsuccessful, however, every attempt of this kind has been. Neither books, conversation, or philosophy, have been able to eradicate the deep-rooted affection. What is still more singular, the flame had seized both our hearts long before either of us were aware of or suspected the secret cause, which forcibly determined us to be no where so easy as in the simple society of two. I have coolly and deliberately, and warmly and passionately, *alternis vicibus*, considered what was most proper to be done. To give up all correspondence would have hurt me extremely; but I have every reason to believe, it would have proved fatal to a female who is constitutionally constant in affection, and whose mind is

sensibility itself. I often resolved, and as often tried to forsake her; and had several times almost diverted the natural bias of my heart. But, when I beheld the very cause of my pain, tortured beyond expression, unless flint or adamant had been the principal ingredients of my composition, I must infallibly have dissolved, retracted my former resolution, and resumed my former passion.

The result of all this is, that in a few days I shall perhaps be personally acquainted with the right-worshipful Hymen. Like the common herd of younkers, you will no doubt pronounce this a mad and distracted resolution. But pause a moment, and listen to the following thoughts. Old Reikie* gave me birth, and in Old Reikie have I lived these twenty-three years and some more. Most of my blood relations have long been in their graves. By a don't know what nor how, I have gained several friends and well wishers, besides a tolerable competency of good acquaintances, in the said Old Reikie. I might probably have lived as long, and per-

† A customary quaint name for the old part of the city of Edinburgh, signifying *Old Smokey*.

haps much longer, in a different quarter of the globe, before I could have been so well known or have met with such friendly reception from a strange people. Here, therefore, moneyless and rich relationless, I have a better chance than any where else; unless you plead that some lucky fortune is always ready to drop into a travellers pocket. But in the common run of adventures, might not some horrible misfortune have as probably gravitated towards my head, and struck me to the ground. Moreover, the girl is far from being in my situation: She has many good relations, to whom I have been introduced, and by whom I am not only well received, but loved and caressed. And over and above, she has a business, which, without any chance of loss, brings in between twenty and thirty pounds yearly. This added to my present pittance of L. 42, will not come far short of a country parsonage. Wonder not when I tell you, that the love of virtue is a strong stimulus to matrimony. I need scarcely mention how hard it is for a young man living singly in a room to be virtuous: Having no spur to prick him home but affection for books and literary speculation, he is constantly dragged along by his thoughtless

companions, and his no less thoughtless self, to foolish and frequently to sinful irregularities. Every other evening he is obliged to crawl to bed with his body steaming with liquor, or his mind dissipated by nonsensical conversation. It has been a frequent wish of mine to be in a situation which would enable me to banish fools and sycophants from my dwelling-place; to be often serious, and seldom giddy. Experience teaches me, however, that my wish can never be gratified so long as I dine in a tavern, live in a hired room, &c. A society consisting of a very few members has always the best chance of being sober and virtuous. A crowd, for what reason I at present know not, is almost constantly impious. I think an essay on this subject would be an excellent lunarian number.

I COULD urge many other motives for the alteration about to take place in my way of life. I could even shew, by mathematical demonstration, that to act otherwise would be highly criminal; nay, even a refractory species of rebellion against the great GOD of nature: But this I decline, as my letter is already too voluminous. Thus have I, without reserve, opened my mind to one whom I

may call my friend. I need not add, that it would be highly improper that this letter should be shewn; for not a single companion but yourself knows any thing of the matter. If you write me not very fully by first post, I shall, as the saying is, be very much out with you.

If you are to stay in Edinburgh this summer, and if I have a house of my own, as the folks say, it would add greatly to my happiness if you would make one in our little society. Every thing shall be made as agreeable to you as possible, and we shall frequently crack about the Man of the Moon, &c. So keen am I about the lunarian scheme, that I believe, though you should entirely desert me, as Heaven avert, I shall one time or other attempt the execution of it alone. Yours, &c.

William Smellie.

The succeeding letter to the same friend is without date; but as, from some allusions, it was obviously written soon after his marriage, and from containing the compliments of the new year, it must have been dated early in January 1764.

No. XXXI.

Mr William Smellie *to* *******,

Dear Sir,

I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. I could give you some speculative observations on this nonsensical vulgar phrase; but I shall reserve them for a Christmas-box to the Man of the Moon. Delays, 'tis said, are dangerous; but I have always thought that precipitance does much more mischief in the world. A year hence will be, I think, a very proper period for the expulsion of this *embryo*, which is about to grow up and to become a *great man*. His magnitude, however, will depend solely on the texture and situation of the febrillæ of our brains. If we miss the peculiar knack of attracting the eyes of a multitude, abortion must inevitably be the consequence. I design to sift the Spectator, and endeavour to discover wherein he excels, and wherein he falls short of the mark. This is talking too pompously;

but it is between you and I, as say the propagators of scandal.

I AM at length totally immersed in matrimony. I wish you could be here at our *feu-de-joye* on Sir ISAAC's birth-day*. This happiness, however, I despair of enjoying. Here I sit in my cabin, grotto†, or what you please to call it, in a very melancholy mood; worn out with correcting the vices of printers‡, and corroded with anxious love. Were my passions at rest, I would entertain you a little longer; but I need not wait for the recovery of my reason, for next morning HALL HUNTER carries you this in his pocket. Adieu.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—You promised me an odd thought from Maupertuis: remember that!

* The Newtonian Society meant to celebrate the anniversary of its patron philosopher.

† Meaning the correcting room or closet.

‡ Alluding to the *errors* made by the printers in composing or setting up their types.

No. XXXII.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* *******.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

MY unfinished letter to you is so various, and so abstract in thought and matter, and myself so circumstanced (this moment hearing my pupil blunder *Bibo*) that I believe you may depend upon never receiving it.

PEOPLE in a family way, as Mrs SMELLIE knows, really have not time to study letters; and it is only women and geniuses, as the same lady knows, who can write them without study. Therefore, when liberty, or genius, or woman inspires, you may depend upon my first flowings: but at present I am a bond-man, an ignoramus, and a misogynist.

I HEAR well enough what you are saying—"I would rather have wanted such a nothing letter." Mrs SMELLIE, too, peeping over your shoulder,—"Might not he have written me a letter, stupid provoking creature, with his

family way." You're both in the right,—very right,—very true: but people in the family way, you know, Mrs SMELLIE knows these things well enough. Yours, &c,

No. XXXIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* ********.

DEAR SIR,

THE pleasure resulting from literary correspondence is manifold. I shall just hint at the two most agreeable of these *folds*.

FOLD the first:—When a man writes to his companion or friend, he never fails to see him present, and to hold an imaginary conversation with him. For instance; here stands my friend, looking slyly down on his parent clod; his golden locks, *a parte posteriore*, curiously adminicled with a hempen rope, and spreading bushy, like bruins tail, on his manly shoulders. *A parte anteriore*, the said red ray-refracting excrements lye flat and sleek on each side his honest front, as if the cub had been recently licked by its pains-taking

dam. His nose and mouth, I see, is not yet embellished with the soul-reviving powder of tobacco, but wisely ornamented with a soft whitish down, &c.

Fold the second is both useful and delectable; for by mutually starting and answering queries, both invention and ratiocination are set to work, which are undoubtedly the most delightful employments our constitution is capable of.

I must immediately proceed to answer, as far as I am able, your notable difficulties; for I am afraid the solution will be pretty long*.

No. XXXIV.

Mr William Smellie *to* *******.

Dear Sir,

You see I am no infidel, because I fulfil my engagements. It could never have en-

* This is obviously the mere fragment of a letter, as the solution of the difficulties which had been started by his friend, and those difficulties themselves, are not to be found among his remaining papers.

tered my pineal gland, that such trifling rebuffs, for the most peevish wretch on earth would not call them misfortunes, would have had so much influence on your sober self, as to convert you into a flat, insipid, fretting misanthrope. * * * * * * * * *

What comes next? A descant on botany, I suppose. I violently suspect that some of your northern conjurers have bribed Eolus; and the rascal seems noways averse to be tipt, for he has these four weeks clung fast to the east and north-east, and has by that means cut the throats of many a beautiful creature of the vegetable tribe. Argal, you cannot expect any thing on that subject. I intend, however, when vegetation begins to increase in the land, to wait upon Orator Hope. This is no reflection on the Doctor; for in Rudimans Rudiments you will see Cicero Orator, which is precisely the same thing with Orator Cicero.

The Newtonian Society was prorogued on the 1st instant till the 12th of November next; but having resolved into a committee of the whole house on the 8th of May, took the

ways and means into consideration for supplying a dozen of gormandizing Newtonians with lamb-legs, fat geese, minced collops, pork, trouts, pease, &c. and then ordered the bills, unread, to lie on the table till the foresaid 12th of November.

NASMYTH, MILLER, and all the good fellows, are gone to the country. I am so much of your opinion that I abhor all triflers; and shall therefore rather chuse to converse with you than to chatter about news, good and bad weather, charming dances, buxom lasses, &c. I formerly promised to answer if you wrote me; I now give it under my hand, that I shall answer you as frequently as you please, and on whatever subjects you may propose. But, if possible, I would recommend such subjects as were never yet attempted in prose or rhyme. Miss BELLAMY shines with much splendour*; but I have so far mortified my inclinations as not to give her half-a-crown.

SEND no more of your letters to HALL, as he keeps them till they begin to foist and breed moths; besides, I am not much

* Miss BELLAMY the celebrated actress, then acting at Edinburgh in conjunction with DIGGES.

in love with second-hand hats, second-hand breeches, or second-hand buckles; but, above all, my very marrow fries and ferments at the idea of second-hand women. These grievances being duly considered, I hope you'll direct to me at MACKAYS, or at COCHRAN & MURRAYS, printers in Craigs Close.

I SHALL inquire after your *kittle kalents** as soon as I can. Next week I shall be gaping like a raw gorb† for a swinging letter. Consider, Mounsieur, I am a mathematician, and remarkably fond of the rule in arithmetic called proportion. My leisure hours are not above one sixth of yours; *argal:*

S. S. : W. S. :: 6 : 1.

REMEMBER this, and I shall continue to be

Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

* A Scóts term meaning slippery boys; but the particular allusion here is unknown.

† A raw unfledged bird in a nest, gaping for food.

No. XXXV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* *******.

DEAR SIR, *No date.*

Thunder! thou frolic of Omnipotence! Though this elegant and spirited exclamation, the author and occasion of which I take it for granted you are sufficiently acquainted with, was furiously beat down by the dull dictates of ignorance and authority, Would to Heaven that these qualities were less frequently coupled! yet, to a man of my cast, it contains a more tremenduous, more striking, more elevated idea of the immensity of that Power which forms, regulates, and puts the match to these majestic explosions, than either the breaking of cedars or the calving of hinds. The Jewish poet, very emphatically indeed, calls thunder the voice of the Lord. He could not have hit perhaps on a better epithet for strengthening that reverential dread which is the natural effect of this phenomenon. But does not the idea it involves represent that of a person summoning up the

whole power and dignity of his soul, collecting these in his countenance, and adding to them the terrors of awful vociferation, in order the more forcibly to strike the timorous imagination of earthly pigmies? Not so the Scottish bard.—*Thou frolic!* Here is neither pomp nor preparation. It exhibits the idea of ease and indifference; and presumes that thunder-bolts are fabricated and darted with the same facility as a man would cast pease in his mouth, scratch his head, or crook his little finger. Henceforward, let not the bards of *fertile* Palestina be likened unto those of barren Caledonia!

As to the effects you so justly ascribe to the influence of thunder, I'll bet my head to a halfpenny, that the very same thing happened to the cattle on the plains of Minden, when two or three hundred cannons roared forth their thunder; especially if the dismalness of the scene was heightened by a calm still atmosphere, and torrents of rain and hailstones. Besides, the sudden effusion of milk in the lactiferous, or of urine or fæces in the purliferous animals, is purely the effect of surprise, and ought not to be ascribed to any peculiarity in the rattling of thunder. Sur-

prise strongly captivates the imagination, and so totally occupies the whole powers of the soul, that this sagacious sentient principle entirely forgets to execute its proper functions, and neglects to commission the nervous fluids into the valves and sphincters of the paps, bladder, and anus: the consequences must infallibly be a profluvium of milk, urine, and fæces.

Even in my small experience, my dear friend, I have met with a very satisfactory proof of what I am now saying. As I was one day marching over a muck-midden, *Anglice* a dunghill, and brandishing a kail-runt* in my right hand, perchance a hen presented herself to my view. Fired at the appearance of this formidable enemy, in a moment I made the clumsy javeline whistle past her nose. Keck, keck, keck, quoth the hen, and dropt a lusty egg, covered only with a thin tough membrane. Is not this as strange as the circumstance you allude to? Secondly, surprise long continued acts as an astringent, and so shuts up these valves more firmly than before their sudden relaxation. Never use

* The stem of a kail or cabbage plant.

Scripture but when you cannot be so well served any where else.

It is remarked by Addison, Swift, or some of those strange genii, that every man while awake is in one common world; but is, while asleep, in a world of his own. How others are affected in their nocturnal excursions I know not; but certain I am that this observation applies, with the most scrupulous exactness to your humble servant. I then seldom or never find myself occupied with familiar objects. My brain is always busied about objects which never did, and never can exist:—Earthquakes; volcanos; showers of liquid fire; the curtains of heaven opened; hell with all its horrors; the last judgment; general conflagration;—hanging; drowning; shooting; burning;—my throat cut from ear to ear; my flesh minced like collops with knives, sabres, &c.;—running the gantlet between two opposite rows of cannons;—conversing with beings quite different, both in nature and form, from those of the human species;—besides innumerable uncouth fantacies which eye hath not seen, nor imagination conceived, neither is it possible for words to utter. All these, I say, are nothing to the

horrid phenomena I am presented with when marching through this world of fancy. What to me appears wonderful is, that neither my visionary tragedies nor comedies end fortunately. If at any time, which indeed is extremely rare, I engage myself in agreeable company, the shutting of the scene turns always out to something worse than vanity; *i. e.* grievous vexation of spirit.—For example:

Some nights ago, I fancied myself in a very magnificent hall, illuminated by numerous shining tapers, and adorned with a splendid group of beaux and belles. The music struck up, the dance was formed, and every eye sparkled with cheerful emotions. I was not an idle spectator of the general festivity. No; my body being light as air, and my soul glowing with social affection, I sprung through all the evolutions of the dance with uncommon vigour and alacrity. But, oh! how can I name the shocking catastrophe? My very flesh shudders at the thought! But out it must. In the midst of this universal mirth; I can't say in the face of the sun, but what I think infinitely worse, in the face of three or four hundred spright-

ly young dames, as I was setting to a most enchanting female, down fell my breeches plump to my heels! Was not this worse than vanity? My misery did not end here; for, on attempting instantly to apprehend the naughty fugitives, I found my hands, legs, and whole fabric, converted, like LUCKY LOT * of old, into a motionless statue. Roused by the sharp stings of painful verecundity, and by the loud laughs of the general assembly, I awoke; and, to my unspeakable comfort, "behold it was a dream."

ANOTHER night I found myself in a most tremendous situation. Alarmed by a sudden shock attended with a hollow subterraneous noise, I ran out to the streets of this populous city, in order to discover the cause. A dreadful prospect presented itself to view. The ground began to undulate like the waves of the sea; sheets of fire dazzled the eye; peals of thunder stunned the ears; the buildings split in a thousand directions; and, had not the native horrors of the scene soon restored me to reason, I should infallibly have been crushed to atoms.

* A Scots familiarism, quasi Mistress LOT, for LOTS wife.

Another nocturnal entertainment, though not so alarming, was much more extravagant and ludicrous. I was for some time diverted with a furious dispute between Dr Monro and Dr Whytt concerning the uses of the *Deltoid Muscle!* The combatants at length became so hot, that they were just proceeding to give the dispute an effectual termination by the intervention of the cudgel, when I awoke.

On a subsequent occasion, my employment was still more serious and awful. I saw a group of winged angels descending from the sky. One of them, who seemed to lead and command the rest, had a large golden trumpet in his hand. When near the surface of the earth, he sounded the instrument, the noise of which made all Nature shrink. He announced the arrival of the last day, that day when the quick and the dead are to be judged, and receive everlasting rewards or torments, according to the merit or demerit of the deeds done by individual mortals. Astonishment and anxiety arrested all the living. They stood motionless, and looked aghast. A new scene instantly appeared. I saw the dead rising in myriads all around me. I par-

ticularly remarked, that, in the *Grey-friars* church-yard, *hundreds* of both sexes pushed one another out of the *same graves!* The day was so cold and frosty, that the terrified expectants of doom were all shivering. Another phenomenon solicited my attention. I saw immense numbers of *leaden pipes* filled with *cold water*. Another trumpet was sounded; and the angel proclaimed, that, instead of being roasted in the *flames* of hell, the *damned* were to have their *limbs* eternally immersed in these *water-pipes*. Terrified and half petrified with this frigifying idea, I started, and awoke. Upon examination, I found that, by some accident, my limbs had been uncovered, and were excessively cold. This simple incident produced the whole scenery I have represented.

Methinks I now hear you exclaim, "Smellie is certainly about to run mad; why does he disturb my rural felicity with such wild chimeras?" Be patient, dear Sir. As I know you to be a great dreamer of dreams and seer of visions, I therefore make application to you, as a demoniac to a conjurer, if it comes within the compass of your

ocult art, to get rid of the evil spirit, or this dreaming devil.

Accept a whole broad-side of queries.

1. Why is one man more addicted to dreaming than another?

2. How comes it about that one man is always entertained with horrid spectacles, while his neighbour is constantly disappointed at the return of the light, merely because he is more happy in his sleeping than in his waking hours?

3. Does this difference depend upon matter or spirit?

4. May not pleasant dreams be owing to a slow, gentle, and easy circulation?

5. In consequence of this, may not a very languid circulation, just sufficient to detain the spark of life, be productive of such a degree of insensibility, both of soul and body, that sensation may totally cease?

6. E contra, May not wild distracted fancies proceed from a too brisk and rapid circulation?

7. In consequence of this again, Would not a very quick circulation deprive us of sleep altogether?

8. Or, if you don't relish this mechanical account of the matter, May not a mans genius be as easily discovered by his nightly visions as by his words and actions during the day ?

This solution would bring me in for a very morose, phlegmatic, dismal, visionary fellow ; and, therefore, I must keenly vote against it.

9. Is not the trite observation mere nonsense, That the soul during sleep, being then less encumbered with the body, becomes more active, and therefore more intelligent ?

10. Is it not more natural to think, that were the soul entirely freed from the body, it would have no sensations at all, unless furnished with other organs wherewithal to be acted upon ?

11. Will not this thought appear more probable, when it is considered that the machine is compound, and that, when its parts are decomposed, none of these parts can act without the assistance of its correspondent ?

Give a clear and accurate solution of these, *et eris mihi magnus Apollo.*

I COULD give you a very moving account of the trial and condemnation of an unfortunate young lass, who was yesterday consecrated, *i. e.* set apart, according to the Hebrew, to two carniverous animals, commonly called Professor MONRO and Son *. But this I decline, fearing that your cogitations are a little tinctured with a drop of the atrabilis. Here's an excellent shower.—The day is overcast, &c.—Dr YOUNG has published a poem entitled Resignation, which is considered as a faint glimmering of a dying luminary.

Valete, et plaudite !

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—I am never ashamed of my name, although it be a very queer one.

No. XXXVI.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* * * * * * *.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

I FIND that a sheet from me is too much for your prolixity, having only got answer to

* This must allude to the dissection of some young female subject by the then joint professors of anatomy, the present Dr ALEXANDER MONRO, sen. and his father.

the first page of my last; so that you must either take to the two sheet letter, or I must fall to a half sheet for a post or two. I am very thankful for any bit of news which I should not otherwise hear of in this desert; but you omit the more, perhaps from thinking it strange we should be ignorant of what is familiar to you. **** **** has left Edinburgh, who was my great source of intelligence. Dr Youngs publication much amazes me. If you have the poem in hand, you'll oblige me to inclose some ten or twelve of his best lines.

The solution of dreams depends on a point which has hitherto been accounted mysterious—the mode of union between the soul and body. I believe it an error in our speculations on these topics to run too greedily upon system and hypothesis; fain to erect a whole structure upon one bottom, which needs many pillars to support it. I am far from receiving your mechanical scheme as an universal solution. It may have its influence, and that too considerable; but what if, in the same night, without any known alteration in the velocity of the fluids, I dream of Elysium and of Tartarus,—the most

sprightly and the most horrible ideas? There seems to be much exercise, during sleep, of that power in the mind of concatenating ideas, and of running from one to another by a very slender thread; and I can't but think that, when both body and mind are in their usual frame, we are susceptible of the same sort of ideas, and of the same variety of them, when asleep as when awake; allowing, at the same time, that an extraordinary velocity of the fluids may determine the train of thinking more forcibly when asleep than when awake. A bad conscience I take to be an excellent thing for procuring anxious dreams.

I AM much taken with your last thought, of investigating the genius and character of a man from his nightly visions. What makes me think it a reasonable and probable way, is the analogy which commonly takes place between ones waking and sleeping thoughts, words, and actions. Experience confirms me of this in my own particular case; for I remember not ever to have acted a part during sleep but what was eminently agreeable to my natural temper. When one is in some measure satisfied of the probability of this,

the advantages which obviously arise from it are twofold. 1. It is a new way to judge of the character of another *; a thing so very difficult as to stand in need of every help; and by means of this, if we can betray a person into the rehearsal of his dreams, we can draw conclusions without any sort of suspicion; at least if we take it for granted that this way of judging is not yet got abroad into the world. 2. The second advantage is like the first, in a matter perhaps of as great difficulty, and of greater importance to every individual, to assist him in forming a just notion of his own character. Our waking actions, and even our sentiments on events, are often so blended and darkened in their principles and motives, that we ourselves are often at a loss to say what and how many motives went to determine us, as the writers on morality witness. By attending and reflecting, therefore, on our sleeping thoughts, words, and actions, the view of our own history is enlarged; we can see our behaviour in a greater variety of scenes, and, of consequence, are better enabled on the whole to form a judgment.

* See on this subject, a Discourse on Dreams, by Mr SMELLIE, in his Philosophy of Natural History, vol. ii. 361.

I FIND I could say a great deal upon this topic. The thought pleases me, and I thank you truly for the hint; but my half sheet forbids a prosecution for the present. If you like the theme, you'll favour me with another *folio* upon it. If you pleased you could sometimes favour me with a letter oftener than once a fortnight. You could write at any time through the week. For example, what would enable me to cut a figure in these parts, an account of the philosophy of hard and soft water; and leave it at the *receptaculum epistolarum.*

Your account of the effects of thunder appears to be very rational: Only, I think there should be something more requisite to extrude the fæces, and to make the hinds calve, than a mere relaxation of the sphincters. In the common performance of these functions, the abdominal muscles are brought into play, not to say the diaphragm likewise; and I know not but the rectum in the one operation, and the uterus in the other, may likewise have their share in the drama.

Je juis le votre.

No. XXXVII.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* * * * * * *.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

I REMEMBER you once proposed that we should write, if possible, on topics unattempted yet in prose or numerous verse. I am no way averse from the proposal, nor do I know a properer man in the world to start such subjects than you; nor a properer person to prosecute them, when started, than your humble servant, provided always that they overleap not the circuit of all human comprehension. You know that my meditations this summer bear clean away from the three kingdoms, except now and then an accidental touching at some of their islands.

WHAT would you think of a discourse in your Magazine* upon the theme of Hybrids? We might spoilzie † the Orator for instance, and add of our own what we may.

* Mr SMELLIE was at this time corrector to MURRAY and COCHRANE, and had the superintendance of the Scots Magazine, then the property of his masters.

† A Scots expression, meaning to pilfer from the lectures of Dr HOPE, on the subject proposed for a joint essay.

THERE are several more vulgar things which I greatly need to have your thoughts upon. Such as, *firstly*, the Curdling of Milk. The calfs stomach with its contents, salted, is it seems employed for this purpose, and likewise the stomach of a pregnant cow, if my information be just. Your chemistry will bear you out in the solution of this; and I will trouble you with no more at present, as I fear me a whole sheet of your spargality will scarce contain a response.

P. S. WILL you now permit me to trouble you with a tender of my respects to Mr WALKER, and an earnest desire to borrow of him his written French Exercises, to assist me in my tutorage. I too wrote them once, but on the Sybils leaves. Finally, it is sperated that any esternism pervading the above schedule, I mean the supra-schedula, will be promptly exculpated by one of your orientality*. I never subscribe my name, but to letters of religion, so you must excuse it for the present; nevertheless, as the above contains a

* This alludes to some comments on passages in the Old Testament, which are here omitted; as however properly they might occupy the attention of ingenious young men in private discussion, they do not seem precisely suitable in a work like the present.

Monroyan discovery, I hereby profess it to have been written on the 14th June 1762, and invented three weeks preceding that date. So I expect you'll shew it to my brother at London, and bear me out in these assertions, when any controversy concerning it shall become more public. No farther seek to pry, as the ghost of HAMLET hath it. Yours, &c.

No. XXXVIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* * * * * * *.

DEAR SIR,

WHY did not you favour me with a paragraph or two of the rhapsody on the eminent sin of uncleanness? You know, at this distance from the humming drones of D——e, I might have given a full swing to my risible faculties with impunity. I am pleased, however, to hear that you only smile at the inconsistent fooleries of your very reverend fathers and brethren; and that you occasionally wait upon occasions. Hiss! an abominably detestable nauseous pun! for which

I dreadfully dread the implacable revenge of all the gods and godlings.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

I DESIGN giving you a complete and serious account of the curdling of milk; in which I propose to invent a new hypothesis as to the cause of coagulation, &c. *

ALTHOUGH a calfs stomach is most commonly used by country people for the coagulation of milk; yet experience shews, that the stomachs of sheep, oxen, cows, horses, goats, deer, hares, conies, cocks, geese, ducks, crows, &c. &c. are all possessed of the same coagulating virtue. The succus gastricus of abortive children, or of new-born babes before they have received the sincere milk; as also the flowers of the artichoke have the power of curdling milk. In short, the stomachs of all animals, exclusive of their contents, are coagulating substances. It is a curious fact, however, that among ruminat-

* The rage for hypothesis was then and long continued the prevalent fashion of the Edinburgh students.

ing animals, the fourth stomach alone serves as a coagulum to milk. It is no less curious, that live fishes put into milk produce this effect; but if dead, whether raw or boiled, they lose their coagulating qualities.

It has been supposed, that the various coagula produce this effect by means of their acidity; but the contrary is proved from this circumstance, that the addition of alkalies, or antacids, does not diminish their coagulating force. Nevertheless, the addition of a quantity of an acid, as for example the juice of lemon, increases the virtue of any coagulum.

Now, to account for the phenomenon. What is the cause, say you? I say, Putrefaction. My reasons for this hypothesis are the following. The animals stomach with its contents, being salted, is hung in the chimney-corner till it has gone through a considerable degree of putrefaction; it is then steeped in salted water for twenty-four hours; a quantity of this pickle or runnet is mixed with milk which has been previously heated; these conjoined make a troop of

very putrefactive gentlemen, and must of necessity forward the putrefaction of a substance so remarkably liable to putrescency as milk. To sum up all in a few words: If milk is kept a few hours in a warm room, it will coagulate without the assistance of any runnet. The addition of a coagulum only forwards or hastens a process which, I imagine, begins to take place immediately after the milk is drawn from the udder, &c.

Send me your remarks on Hybrids; to which I shall add whatever I think deficient, and prepare it for a place in the Magazine. I have carefully marked the day on which you invented the most convincing of all arguments in favour of the sexual system; and shall depone accordingly. Yours, &c.

William Smellie.

No. XXXIX.

Mr William Smellie *to* * * * * * * *.

Dear Sir,

Instead of disrelishing the subject of commemoration; there is not any thing in which

I would so much desire to be fully instructed, to have my doubts cleared up, my apprehensions removed, and my resolution strengthened *.

I WILL not enter into any argument upon the propriety or impropriety of the institution, as it would be highly base and disingenuous to find any fault with what my reason and conscience approve. I will rather endeavour, with all the candour I am master of, to lay open to you the real motives which have hitherto obstructed my compliance.

IT is long since I began to think of this subject. When very young, my feelings were strong, and my desires of being old and worthy were ardent. Afterwards, although I cannot accuse myself of being altogether sceptical, I wished to be fully satisfied with regard to the truth and authenticity of Christianity. For this purpose, but not with such diligence as I ought, I made it my business to read and

* This is an interesting letter, in which our young philosopher, probably then under twenty-three years of age, opens his mind unreservedly to his companion, who was a student of divinity, upon the subject of religion; on which he anxiously courts his assistance and advice.

converse about the evidences. For some time past I have got over every doubt which can have the least influence upon my principles or moral conduct. If I had no other motive, this consideration alone is sufficient to make me believe in the Gospel, preferably to every other religion I am acquainted with. No man who is in the least acquainted with the human nature, or the history of mankind, before the appearance of our Saviour, can possibly dispute the propriety and necessity of a divine revelation. There are but three religions of any consideration in the world that pretend to a direct revelation. I am thoroughly satisfied that of these, Christianity is the most rational,—best accommodated to the weakness and imperfections of mankind,—freest from absurdity, or even mystery, in its doctrines and institutions;—in a word, has more genuine marks of something superior to human wisdom. A man who can say this much with sincerity, and after a tolerably accurate comparison, is, I hope, not far from being a Christian.

One would naturally think, and it is unquestionably my duty, that nothing now remained but a hearty and diligent compliance with all the precepts and institutions of this

religion. But men have more motives to action than belief. It were easy to be a Christian, if a diligent attendance upon its public institutions were the only thing required. But, besides these, Christianity requires the purest and most perfect virtue, habitual gratitude and devotion to God, to the Saviour of the world. To guard against deceptions, to oppose the passions, to check vitious propensities, to keep devotion alive in the heart. A strict regard to these things would be sufficient employment for all our thoughts and all our industry, although no necessary interruptions were to occur. Heaven not only demands all this, but even that we should daily grow more and more perfect. Such, however, is the situation of almost the whole human race, that it is absolutely impossible, in the nature of things, that they should ever make even a tolerable progress in the duties of Christianity. The greatest and most valuable part of our time is necessarily consumed in labouring for subsistence; after which we must rest and sleep, to prepare for returning to our labour. Crosses in business and private affairs disturb our thoughts, and often put us out of all tune for devotion or religious exercises. These are difficulties

which you are well acquainted with. I mean not to mention purity and devotion as objections to Christianity; on the contrary, they are its excellence and its glory. But I mention these unavoidable difficulties as some apology for the small progress I have made in virtue and true goodness. I confess the apology is bad; for much time is spent, to say no worse of it, in idleness and amusement, and sometimes in unprofitable study. But I promised to disclose the real motives that obstruct my progress in religion. So far as I know myself, *bashfulness* is the great source of all my errors. All other passions I have learnt to keep at least within decent bounds; but this passion is deeply rooted. That it is so I will not attribute entirely to constitution. I think I can trace something like a cause or origin. It was my misfortune, very early in life, to lose my mother. My father, though he set before me an example of the purest manners and warmest devotion, was necessarily abroad at business from morning to night. He had no time to cause his children exhibit any portion of their religious duties before him. He was naturally abstracted; and performed every thing of that kind by himself. He often inculcated prayer, &c.

but enjoined secrecy, and never asked to hear our performances. You can easily see that, in a family of this nature, company would be but seldom indulged. Thus things went on, till I arrived at fourteen years of age, when I was put to business. This recluse kind of life had stampt such strong impressions of shamefacedness and bashfulness, that I dare say I was twenty years of age before I could even venture to read aloud in presence of a human creature. Since that time I have thrown off a great deal; but, when so much was to do, a great deal makes but a small appearance. I am still far behind what I know to be my duty, which I earnestly wish to accomplish.

You will probably think that I ought to make a bold push. But an enterprize of this kind has done mischief. About five years ago I attempted this, and even proceeded so far as to pray one evening in a family. You need not doubt but this was the result of much intreaty. You can scarcely figure my situation. I trembled,—my tongue faultered,—neither sentiment nor expression could I command. In short, I was so highly disgusted with my performance, that I almost

secretly resolved never to make such another attempt.

My present situation is likewise unfortunate: Considerably chagrined with difficult affairs: Another person living in the house besides my own family. This last circumstance is an insuperable objection against setting that example which I so much desire. I hope, however, soon to get free from this obstruction, to take a cheaper house, and to live more privately. This is procrastinating, but I cannot resist. I could hardly think of communicating without previously setting up family worship, which I can never attempt till we are entirely alone; nor would I chuse to begin it without adhering uniformly to the practice.

I have endeavoured to be candid, to throw aside all sophistry, and to unbosom myself with simplicity and truth. I doubt not, however, but you will be able to perceive both sophistry and deceit. If you do, I expect and desire you'll point them out.

You ask a poor favour. I have some of your letters; others are destroyed. My

only motive for keeping them was this,—Whatever revolutions might happen, either with regard to you or myself, that I might possess some memorials of a friendship which even then I valued, but for which I now have better cause. I shall examine them all; and shall deliver such as are exceptionable into your own hands. Or, if you desire it, I shall make yourself judge of what shall be preserved, or whether any should*.

Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. XL.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* * * * * * * *.

DEAR SMELLIE,

OUR last nights conversation was so interesting, and so imperfect, that I cannot help resuming it.

* Had there been no other motive for the rigid delicacy observed in communicating this correspondence to the public, which has been already explained, this would have been considered as an imperious command, or testamentory rule of conduct, for the Editor.

YOUR great objection to communicating seems to be, "The perfection of virtue which is requisite." No doubt, new and complete obedience must be resolved upon, but in a way consistent with human imperfection. Christian morality, in itself, cannot be conceived as too pure and perfect; but there seems an impropriety in supposing that perfection to be requisite to qualify us for a means of attaining it. The object of Christianity is to train us to virtue; and all its institutions are adapted to this end. There are stated seasons of instruction, that our knowledge and virtue may be continually increasing. There are stated acts of devotion enjoined, because there still are sins to be confessed, and pardon and assistance to be asked. A stated memorial of CHRISTS death is instituted, which supposes a tendency to forget it, and to forget that horror at guilt which it so strongly inculcates.

PREPARATION for these several acts of religion is surely proper, and the most virtuous will perform them the most worthily; but still they are only means of virtue; and consequently a desire after, rather than the actual possession, seems to be the natural pre-

paration; and a desire for higher degrees of it, the preparation for the more solemn act. After all, if the high idea of perfection is conceived requisite, it is not an argument for absolute and determined neglect, but rather for deliberate and zealous preparation. You conceive that guilt afterwards will be highly aggravated; and to be sure it will, in proportion to the fitness and excellence of the means; but the laws of virtue are of themselves sacred and obligatory, and consequently the means of virtue are so; wherefore the deliberate and obstinate neglect of the means is an aggravation on the other hand. To have used means and come short of the end, bespeaks a feebleness and inconstancy; yet the attempt is good; and the success, however small, is better than none. But the neglect even of the means bespeaks a total unconcernedness; and its pernicious effects, though not so obvious, are equally real; for to it must be imputed the loss of all these pious sentiments, gratitude, love, remorse, and of that partial or temporary reformation which the use of means produces, likewise the suffering neglect to grow into a habit, and giving scope to that self-deceit and sophistry which are natural to the

mind, when determined upon any thing improper.

You are afraid of shewing a bad example afterwards—a very reasonable ground of fear. Example, especially when there is any thing of respect and deference, is important and sacred. Next to the virtues of ones own heart, it deserves the chief attention, as it is the most successful method of recommending goodness. Hence, it is surely agreeable to the designs of Providence, that they who are sincerely virtuous, and considered as such, should be exemplary in all the means of virtue; and the fear of coming short, after using the most excellent of the means, will operate as an additional motive to become a perfect pattern.

You object to all this, that the not communicating is overlooked; whereas the doing it and behaving inconsistently is notorious. Were example the only thing, there might be something in this; yet not even then, unless there be more than an equal chance of behaving inconsistently, and of that inconsistent behaviour being known. Neither is the neglect of it so wholly over-

looked: By the many to be sure it is; but every one has his circle, who know and observe him. There are shallow and unthinking infidels, who grasp at such an argument: —there are timorous and diffident youth, who are thereby the more discouraged;—to encourage one in this class, to silence one in that, are no inconsiderable objects in the way of example.

I know you can make allowance for self-deceit on your own part, as well as for prejudice on mine, and will therefore excuse a suspicion that the above and other objections of the like kind are not the real ones, at least not the strongest. Such refinements are oftener the product of a mind already determined, than the motives of determination: They soothe and quiet the principle of reason, or, more properly, they are the operation of that principle bent one way, eager upon every objection and every argument that may tend to confirm and make it obstinate. If you read over these hints with an inclination not to be persuaded, but rather to detect false reasoning; that, though not intended, will very probably be found, and may suggest this inference, that an ar-

gument which has been badly supported is not tenable. These suspicions are suggested by experience. Every new argument in defence of my conduct gives pleasure, and it is pleasant to invent and refine upon them. All arguments against are unpleasant; and there is a tendency to discover their weakness, rather than to consider their weight. All refinement apart, there seems a direct obligation on all who believe in CHRIST, in his friendship and good offices to the world, especially evinced by his death, to remember it as a memorial and a debt of gratitude. It is no more than we would do in memory of a friend and benefactor, who had requested it as his dying wish.

THE cares of a family, and health, and business, are great apologies, and will no doubt excuse a less deliberate preparation. But, so long as we have leisure for company, conversation, essays of genius, and trifles, the excuse is not complete. Shame is a great restraint; it is one of those against which CHRIST has warned us, and the breaking through it is insisted upon as a proof of our regard in this state of trial. A habit of neglect is most difficult to conquer; but, in the eye

of sound reason, it is an aggravation rather than an apology; and, if no attempts are made, it will always be growing stronger. At the very least, it seems reasonable to consider the matter fairly and fully, and, as much as may be, to lay aside prejudice, carefully weighing the arguments on both sides.

Were I as good a man as I ought, I should reason better on its usefulness. You have known all my weaknesses since ever our friendship commenced; and I will now tell you, in the confidence of friendship, that any attempts towards a better temper have been commonly suggested at the time of the communion. The impropriety of mocking, or lightly treating, the name, character, word, and institution, of so dear and generous a friend;—the obligation to temperance, industry, and natural affection, friendship, charity;—the importance of studying usefulness, and that only, in my profession;—the importance of a lesson which I shall never be perfect in upon earth, true humility:—the great importance of inward purity and uprightness. It is almost impossible, at a communion, not to bethink ourselves of our vices, and to make some attempts to re-

form them; to entertain some sentiments of love to our fellow Christians; to lay some plans for doing good; to be somewhat affected with the love of JESUS, and to look forward to his second coming to judge us according to our present conduct. Methinks the having a family should render this duty particularly engaging. I cannot express what I felt, when I saw Mr BALFOUR of Pilrig leading his blind wife to the table of the LORD, where they united in the most pure and solemn act of devotion, forgetting a misfortune that must be perpetual here; or rising from it to a more affecting and thankful contemplation of the period when the misfortunes, and troubles, and humility, and patience of this state, shall enhance everlasting joy.

THE training up of children to religion and virtue is an interesting object; the joining with them in acts of devotion, by which they and we will be united hereafter and to all eternity, is truly sublime. The remembrance of a communion diffuses pleasure over the soul in times of melancholy, distress, and sorrow. I have seen it particularly pleasing on a death-bed; and on another occasion the ne-

glect of it was regretted bitterly. I know you will impute this to friendship, and shall therefore make no apology. It is absolutely betwixt ourselves. If you dislike the subject, I shall never speak or write upon it again, leaving our intercourse and friendship upon the same footing as before; though I must own it would give me sincere pleasure, as a new bond of affection in a much valued friendship, were you to enter more fully into the benevolent designs of JESUS; and let his love constrain you to remember him, and to enter more directly into his service, that we might unite in the faith and obedience of the gospel, and assist one another to rise in resemblance of our SAVIOUR, and die in the hope of that immortality which he has revealed, and meet HIM in the clouds, adoring together the wonders of GODS love to all eternity. Yours, &c.

WE now take leave, with regret that it is so imperfect and abrupt, of this interesting correspondence between these two young and ingenious friends. Had the whole series been preserved, we are convinced that it would have afforded an excellent example

for the imitation of other young men similarly situate, and eager like them to avail themselves of reciprocating friendly assistance to instruct and be instructed, by the joint investigation of various literary topics, and by the free interchange of critical observations on their mutual essays.

Before proceeding to more grave matters of public literary enterprise, we have thought it proper to subjoin two other miscellaneous letters, which have no reference or connexion with any particular fact or transaction of Mr Smellies life, either in regard to his business as a printer, or with any literary concern or adventure. The first of these was written by Mr Smellie to the Reverend Dr George Campbell, Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and author of a much admired Treatise on Miracles, in answer to the celebrated David Humes observations on that subject. It appears to have been written for the purpose of acquiring some fixed principles of argument upon a difficult topic of philosophical theology, which were to be submitted to a society of which Mr Smellie was then a member.

On the subject of Miracles, an extended correspondence took place between Mr Smellie and David Hume; the former endeavouring to overturn the doctrine which had been set forth in Mr Humes Essays, and the latter strenuously supporting and defending his published arguments and positions. But that correspondence, which had been seen and read by Mr Alexander Smellie, was long ago destroyed by his father, along with many other interesting letters, essays, and literary projects, as already mentioned on several occasions. In an after part of these Memoirs, there will be found an abstract or abridgement of the arguments for and against the credibility of Miracles, by Dr Campbell and Mr Hume, drawn up in a masterly manner by Mr Smellie for the first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, which sets this momentous controversy in a singularly clear and satisfactory light.

The second of these letters, likewise on a philosophical subject, is from Professor Wilson of the University of Glasgow, to whom Mr Smellie appears to have transmitted a letter or discourse on Final Causes, which is not now to be found among his papers.

No. XLI.

Mr William Smellie *to the Reverend Dr* Campbell.

Rev. Doctor, *Edinburgh, 25th April* 1765.

Nothing but your character as a philosopher could justify a letter of this nature from a person whose very name must be unknown to you.

In his Essay on Providence and a Future State, David Hume has advanced an argument, which not only strikes at the foundation of that comfortable doctrine, but likewise tends to create suspicions with regard to one of the most amiable perfections of the Deity. If the Supreme Being be possessed of ever so much power or wisdom, what consolation can that afford to a reasonable creature, unless his goodness or beneficence be equally extensive? The cause, says that ingenious philosopher, is always proportioned or limited to the effect. If the goodness displayed in this world is but small and in-

considerable, why do we ascribe more of that quality to the cause than what is discoverable in the effect?

Now, Sir, when I first read the Essay, I confess that this argument, although supported with great ingenuity, and ornamented with all the beauties that composition can bestow, did not, however, appear to be altogether satisfactory. That there was a fallacy in the reasoning I never once doubted; but it is difficult at the same time to point out with accuracy and precision where that fallacy lies. This, however, I shall attempt; and I mean to send it to Mr Hume himself.

Is it in every instance agreeable to reason, that the cause should be exactly proportioned or limited to the effect? Here the fallacy must lie. Does not the gradual discovery of new effects, proceeding from the same cause, lay a reasonable foundation for ascribing greater power to the cause than results merely from its known effect? This holds even in physical causes. Moral causes, being more complex in their nature, must be subject to still greater varieties; and, of course, must tend to produce a more thorough

conviction of power in the cause superior to the production of those effects which we are already acquainted with. The longer a man lives, and the more he inquires into the physical or moral constitution of this world, he undoubtedly discovers greater and greater degrees of wisdom and goodness in its constitution and government. But it seems doubtful whether such a person will not find, in the course of his observations, that the scale of goodness does not ascend in the same proportion with that of power and wisdom. The creation and preservation of matter, in all the variety of forms which is displayed even in this world, demonstrates a degree of power and wisdom which is infinite, at least with regard to our conceptions. But the goodness which appears in this world is neither superior to our conceptions, nor any way equal in degree to the wisdom and power which is displayed in the formation of a single animal body.

It has been alleged, and not without some foundation, that many of the evils, to which human nature is subjected, take their rise from irregularities in our own conduct;—that physical evils are productive of moral good, &c.

But every person of reflection must have observed that there is a prodigious group of physical evils which have no dependence on our behaviour. Slight and temporary afflictions evidently induce a serious and virtuous habit of mind. But the stone, and such distempers as haunt a man through the greatest part of life, instead of assisting our virtue, have, I am afraid, a natural tendency to sour and fret the mind, to render us peevish and discontented. The mind, when constantly galled with pain, is so totally occupied, that it is deprived of the power of exerting any virtuous disposition, unless the fortitude of a few individuals be an exception.

Perhaps we are not so impartial in our judgments of goodness as of power and wisdom. Men are strongly biassed in favour of every thing connected with their own happiness. We often mistake wherein true happiness consists. Not thoroughly skilled in our own constitution and relations, we frequently wish for enjoyments and degrees of enjoyment totally inconsistent with our nature. This perhaps may contribute both to mislead our reasonings concerning goodness,

and to hinder us from enjoying that degree of it which is placed within our reach.

After all, I am unable to satisfy myself upon this subject. I was informed, Sir, by a west-country gentleman, that he once had the happiness of hearing a lecture from you upon this subject. But, as he had never read Mr Humes essay, and did not at the time think himself much interested in the inquiry, he was not in a capacity to give any account of your discourse, farther than that it was equally ingenious and satisfactory. I am ashamed to give you the trouble of transmitting a summary of your reasoning on this subject: but, as I beg this favour not simply for myself, but for above a dozen of philosophical acquaintances, who are equally dubious on this point, I presume to hope that your goodness will induce you, at a convenient season, so far to oblige, Sir, Yours, &c.

William Smellie.

P. S.—An answer, directed to me in Moffats land, Bow-head, Edinburgh, will be patiently expected, and thankfully received.

At first sight it may appear odd that so just a thinker as Mr Smellie, who had studied medicine regularly, should for a moment have been induced to bring forward the consideration of ordinary disease as an instance of want or deficiency of goodness in the moral attributes of the Deity: It is obvious that at least nine tenths of such human evils are the consequences of wrong conduct in the patients themselves, their ancestors, or caused by the situations in which the diseased persons are placed by merely human institutions; and it may be reasonably conjectured that the remaining fraction is in a similar predicament. It must however be considered, that Mr Smellie was then a very young man, eager in the prosecution of knowledge; and in this letter, he may naturally be supposed rather to state the ordinary objections against the universal benevolence of an over-ruling Providence, in hopes of receiving instruction on the subject from his reverend correspondent, than intending seriously to impugn that comfortable doctrine.

No. XLII.

To Mr William Smellie *from Professor* P. Wilson *of the University of Glasgow.*

Dear Sir, *Glasgow*, 18*th February* 1767.

I received your discourse on *Finalization* long since, and perused the same to my great profit. As the question was first put by me, you'll no doubt wonder how I have not ere now showed you the like deference, by communicating my remarks on Dreamers and Dreams. Your topic promises to be curious in the investigation; every attempt, however, to finalize upon the matter puts an end to my researches. Sometimes, I am apt to think that I have stumbled on the *causa*, upon the first entrance into the discussion. I say to myself, What can be the cause final, middle, and principient, that this said *Wednesday* is, in our longitude, the 18th day of February 1767? Could not this same present day as well have been to-morrow?

I FIND I must relinquish this subject till meeting; when we shall endeavour to penetrate beyond the veil of this argument, under the benign influence of tobacco smoke and porter at CLARYHEUGHS*. Your late animadversion on *hearts* lie a little at my *stomach*.

I RECEIVED yours of the 13th, accompanying some proposals for the *Family Physician*, most of which I have distributed as directed. You may rely that I shall do every thing for your interest in the matter that is possible for me; and there is no need to advance any new motives to attach me farther to you.

Yours, &c.

P. WILSON.

ABOUT the same period with that of the early correspondence already adverted to, an intimate and frequent reciprocation of letters appears to have taken place between Mr SMELLIE and Dr WILLIAM BUCHAN, the author of a very popular and successful work, entitled Domestic Medicine. A portion of that correspondence still remains, from which several

* The name of the keeper of a tavern in Edinburgh at the time.

letters have been selected for insertion in these Memoirs.

Dr William Buchan was born at Ancram, in the shire of Roxburgh, in 1739. He was educated at Edinburgh with a view to entering into the ministry of the Church of Scotland; but changed his purpose, and devoted himself to the study of Medicine. After finishing his academical studies, and having received the diploma of Doctor, he settled at Ackworth in Yorkshire, where he became physician to a foundling hospital. On the dissolution of that establishment, he removed to Sheffield, famous for its cutlery manufacture. Whether from not succeeding entirely to his satisfaction, or with a view to the more convenient publication of his intended great work, Domestic Medicine, does not certainly appear, though both may have contributed to the change, he returned to Edinburgh, where he endeavoured to get into practice as a physician, but with no great success. In 1770 he published his work entitled Domestic Medicine, or a Treatise on the Cure and Prevention of Diseases, in which he was very materially assisted by Mr Smellie. In the course of the correspondence between them which yet remains, it will appear very

obvious that the Doctor evinced very great anxiety to avail himself of Mr Smellies aid. One circumstance on this subject has been frequently mentioned by Mr Smellie to his friends,—that the original manuscript of the work was prodigiously redundant; insomuch that one of the chapters alone, as originally written, and produced for printing, would have nearly equalled the size of the whole work as first printed; and that Mr Smellie compressed that, and all the rest of the work, into reasonable bounds.

In a former part of these Memoirs we have inserted a letter from Dr William Wright, an eminent physician still living, in which the entire composition of the Domestic Medicine is attributed to Mr Smellie, on the authority of Dr Gilbert Stuart; and this is also maintained by many others still in life. But we are inclined to believe that this carries the matter too far, and that the preceding account of it is correct.

The Domestic Medicine, as already mentioned, was first published at Edinburgh in 1770; and so great was its success that it has gone through twenty regular editions of

6000 copies each, besides many pirated editions in Ireland and America, and some even in Britain; which latter were reprinted from the earlier editions, after the expiration of the copy right, and consequently did not contain the progressive improvements made by the author.

While he remained in Edinburgh, Dr Buchan became possessed, by bequest, of the philosophical apparatus of James Ferguson the celebrated astronomer and lecturer on experimental philosophy, and attempted to give a popular course of lectures on the subjects which had been long ably and successfully handled by that eminent and self-taught philosopher. Neither these lectures nor his medical practice succeeding to his wishes, the Doctor went up to London, where he expected that the fame of his work would have procured him a ready introduction to extensive and profitable practice. But his manners and habits again disappointed his views; and, though his book long preserved the most extensive and unrivalled fame, the author pined in obscurity, and died poor. During his residence in London, he published two other useful works, both of them single

octavo volumes;—a Treatise on the Venereal Disease, which went through *three* editions; and Advice to Mothers on the subject of their own Health, and on the means of promoting the Health, Strength, and Beauty of their Offspring. He died at London in 1805.

The correspondence between Dr Buchan and Mr Smellie, as already observed, appears to have commenced about the year 1759 or 1760. Like most of the letters and papers found in the repositories of Mr Smellie, the dates of the remaining letters are generally deficient, which precludes the possibility of arranging them in any certain order. This correspondence appears to have been commenced by Dr Buchan, with a proposal or advice to his friend and companion to abandon what he deemed the servile occupation of a journeyman printer. The first letter of the following series, but which evidently alludes to a former correspondence on the subject, proposes that Mr Smellie should devote himself to the study of medicine. From two allusions in the answer to this proposal by Mr Smellie, this part of the correspondence appears to have taken place about the close of

1759, or the commencement of 1760, as Mr Smellie mentions the agreement he had entered into with Messrs Murray & Cochrane as a recent event, and says that the professor of anatomy was then too far advanced in his course for beginning to attend his lectures that season.

It is quite obvious from the tenor of this correspondence, especially at its commencement, that Dr Buchan was very eager to have seduced Mr Smellie from his situation of corrector of the press, and to have conferred upon him the *splendid* office of dispenser of medicines, anatomical assistant, and literary drudge at Ackworth; with a *quantum sufficit* of meat and drink as his hire, but without money or cloathing. The Doctor had probably by this time planned the composition of his great work, Domestic Medicine, or some other medical performance, with a view of bringing himself into notice; and, conscious that he required important aid, he appears to have wished to exchange his then indolent shopman, Mr Rutherford, for a person whom he believed, and afterwards found to be qualified to maturate his plans, and to carry them into successful execution, as will appear in the sequel.

No. XLIII.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from Dr* WILLIAM BUCHAN.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

The only scheme that I can put you upon, or assist you in, is as follows. Get as much knowledge picked up at Edinburgh this winter as possible, and hold yourself in readiness to come up along with me about the end of May next; and you shall be welcome to live with me until you learn pharmacy, and see as much practice as to be able to set up for yourself. If you make yourself very useful to me, you shall be upon the same footing with Mr Rutherford; viz. bed, board, washing, &c. free: and if you don't chuse to serve me in that capacity, which indeed will only be *serving* yourself, you shall have all these things upon the most reasonable terms in my house; and I will trust you for payment until you shall be in a capacity. This, in one word, is the scheme, and I would have you consider of it.

I CAN easily provide Mr RUTHERFORD, as soon as I know of another to fill his place; but, instead of giving any thing, I might have money for taking young men, but can't think of being plagued with them; so chuse only to have one of whom I can make a companion. Mr RUTHERFORD understands pharmacy very well, and knows a good deal of diseases; and no wonder, as he enjoys greater privileges at present than any young man in England. You know my turn is not to conceal what I know, but am rather too fond to communicate. The only fault I have to JOHN is indolence: he absolutely refuses to assist me in any one of my curious researches; and won't so much as touch a subject, or attend when I am opening a child, let the case be ever so curious, but wants always to sit and hang his head over a book. This makes me lose many curious preparations, which I have not time to make myself, and which nothing can induce JOHN to bestow a little labour upon. No body can do better if he would, but no one did I ever see possessed of such a degree of indifference. I am just now preparing a curious skeleton in the next room to where he sits; but he has never once deigned to give it a

look, far less to give me any assistance, though I desired him in the most pressing manner. "Who would be plagued with such nonsense?" is all his answer. Now, I leave you to judge if such a man can have a parallel. Who, in his right wits, would not jump at such an opportunity? Yours, &c.

W. BUCHAN.

No. XLIV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to Dr* WILLIAM BUCHAN.

DEAR SIR, *No date.*

As I hate cramming letters with compliment and apology, I shall here, without ceremony, communicate to you my naked thoughts concerning the generous scheme you propose.

I BEGIN with a description of my present situation. Two months after you left this place, I had an offer of L.41 a-year to correct for Messrs MURRAY and COCHRANE, which I accepted, and am engaged for twelve

months, beginning 22d November 1759; but I am by no means confined, and have more opportunities of reading now than ever I had.

Had this agreeable scheme been proposed two months sooner, nothing could have gratified my wishes more. But Monro is far on with his subject; and I cannot think of entering in the middle of a session. I long much to hear a particular detail of your proposal. In the mean time, supposing this session to be lost, the method I intend to pursue is this. I shall read books on physic with great application from this time till Alstons summer class, which I shall attend, and take Monro next season. If this, with the directions I expect to receive from you, particularly in the choice of my books and method of study, can by any means bring about what you desire, it will give me infinite satisfaction, and I hope shall be the era from which I shall hereafter date my happiness.

As I have more paper left than I expected when I sat down to write, I cannot conclude better than by putting the head where the tail should be, congratulating you on your

good fortune, or rather happy genius; and assuring you that nothing can give me greater pleasure than to hear of your success; which that it may increase as your wishes, is the prayer of, Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—PRAY write me soon. If this affair does not succeed, I wish from my heart it had never been spoken of; for it has touched one of my quickest senses, and excited that passionate desire which has always possessed my breast; viz. to have study for my constant employment, especially the study of Nature in all her various operations, and the study of physic appears to be the only cure for this my painful distemper.

No. XLV.

Dr WILLIAM BUCHAN *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR SMELLIE, *No date.*

I TAKE this opportunity of troubling you once more with a few lines, in order to keep

up our old friendship, which I am determined shall not fail on my side. I have been in a perpetual hurry since I left you, otherwise would have wrote you sooner; but I flatter myself that it won't be disagreeable news to you to hear that more advantageous employment than that of letter writing takes up my whole time and attention.

The bearer, Mr Wood, for whom I have a great respect, intends to spend some time at Edinburgh in the study of physic; and, as I believe him to be a sober, sensible, young gentleman, I can with the greatest freedom recommend him to your acquaintance, which I hope will be of considerable service to him, as he is an entire stranger to the country, and may need to be informed of sundry particulars relating to his method of studying, living, lodgings, &c. I am satisfied that you can be of as much use to him in all respects as if I was upon the spot, so shall say no more on that subject.

I own it gave me some concern and a good deal of surprise, when in Edinburgh, to find you so undetermined as to your future project for life, as I am satisfied no

man can fix too soon or prosecute his plan with too much steadiness, if he ever hopes to make a figure in any one branch of business or literature. If ever you form a resolution to pursue the study of physic, and can make me any way subservient to your plan, you know you may always command any service in my power. I shall be glad to hear what classes you attend this winter; and, if any thing new is talked of, I don't need, I hope, to desire you to communicate the same.

I GREATLY want some anatomical preparations; and you, I think, have it in your power to help me to a few. The method to come at them will be by applying to JACK INNES, as he has these things frequently to dispose of, and I shall not grudge money if they are pretty good ones. You must apply as if they were for yourself; and I will put you upon the method of sending them up; but I am afraid nothing but dried preparations could be carried, or such as can bear a deal of motion without being broken to pieces or destroyed.

I SHOULD chuse to have as many parts of the human body, injected and dried, as you can procure; such as arms, legs, hearts, stomachs, &c. One thing I greatly want is, to have all the bones of a strong old subject asunder and well marked by the impressions of the muscles. I don't much mind whether they all belong to the same subject, so that they are well marked.

YOU see I have no room for communicating any thing curious, but if you will write soon you shall have a packet.

I WAS highly entertained to-day by a man who came to me for advice, and who firmly believed he was turned into a woman *.

Yours, &c.

W. BUCHAN.

* It has not been deemed necessary to insert the medical case here alluded to.

No. XLVI.

Mr William Smellie *to Dr* William Buchan.

Dear Doctor, 1761.

I should be extremely sorry if our friendship were dissolved, merely because our views of the same object were different. Your delay indeed gave me pain; but I guessed the cause, and earnestly wish for the continuance of it. Business must constantly be preferred to letters of amusement. Mr Wood answers in every respect the character you gave of him. He is very fond of Edinburgh. As to lodgings, &c. he is agreeably enough situate.

Resolution is certainly a necessary qualification for carrying mankind through every stage of life. But you must allow that a very great degree of it is required, when a man is about to leave friends, relations, companions, &c.; and not only so, but in a moment to change entirely his former sphere of

action, and to launch into the practice of an art which demands both labour and abilities.

I DOUBT much if I shall be able to procure the preparations you mentioned; and, were it practicable to procure them, I imagine it would be next to impossible to preserve them from being injured by so long a carriage. I shall, however, attempt to get you as many bones as I can procure.

I AM singularly indebted to you for communicating any thing curious that occurs in practice. The story of your crazy would-be hermaphrodite diverted me highly. I wish I could entertain you as well in return. But that is beyond my power, for every thing here is as dull and insipid as usual. One HARRIS is just about to be caped. The subject of his thesis is *de Abortu*. I expect nothing new from it.

DR CULLEN lately presented me with a ticket without any solicitation. Business does not admit of my attending any one else. With regard to the practice of physic, I am still as undetermined as ever.

Some weeks ago I was desired by the Society of Masons to give them a discourse on Charity. This I delivered on Monday se'enight. The lodge ordered it to be printed; and I believe I shall make two or three guineas of it.

Our Newtonian Society goes on with great vigour. I shall be happy to hear from you as soon as your convenience will admit of. My kind compliments to Mrs Buchan. Yours, &c.

William Smellie.

No. XLVII.

Dr William Buchan *to Mr* William Smellie.

Ackworth, August 20. 1761.

Dear Willie,

I had your favour in due course; and am, I assure you, very sorry that your subject did not prove in every respect to your satisfaction; however, I think, by the account you have made of it, your labour has not at all been lost.

Honest John is got quite well again; but is such an indolent rogue, that I am afraid you will not avail yourself much of his correspondence. He has, however, done one great work since he came here; viz. compiling a Dispensatory, which, if he was not afraid of a discovery by some of your Edinburgh critics, he would entitle Pharmacopœia Rutherfordiana.

I should be glad to know if you attend Dr Hope, and how he seems to succeed. I don't in the least doubt his good intentions; but am a little afraid that he wants the knack of pleasing his pupils; and that, I assure you, is all and all with a public teacher.

As I take Edinburgh at present to be the seat of the medical muses, I shall reckon myself highly obliged to you if frequently you will be so good as transmit me an account of whatever you may think worth communicating; and in return you may depend upon any observations that I can pick up in this part of the country. I have quite altered my theory of vegetation; but, as I have read no treatise upon that subject, and as your new opinion is entirely the result of

observations, so I hope it will stand the test. I purpose to commit some of my observations to writing as soon as possible; and if they please me when digested, I shall be glad of the sentiments of my Edinburgh friends on the subject; for which purpose a copy shall be sent to you; and which if you please to read in the Society, you may.

Believe me, dear WILLIE, &c.

W. BUCHAN.

No. XLVIII.

Dr WILLIAM BUCHAN *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Ackworth, Saturday, 7th November 1761.

DEAR WILLIE,

IT has surprised me greatly that I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you since I wrote you last. I really intended to have used you as a correspondent; and had promised myself a good deal of satisfaction from the information that I hoped you would communicate to me from time to time, of any thing curious that was going on in your

part of the world, as that happens to be at present the seat of the medical muses. I am afraid you don't care to take the trouble of writing, though I intended to have communicated to you all the observations I am capable of making in this part of the world, in order to render our correspondence as useful on both sides as possible.

If you intend to pursue the study of physic, I should be glad to know what classes you mean to attend this winter; and if you don't think yourself too wise for advice, would offer you mine on the occasion, as a person can often see better afterwards what he ought to have done than the greatest prudence is able to foresee.

Your friend Mr Rutherford is still with me; and, though I could find sundry places for him here, yet I think I am more his friend by keeping him by me for some time, than to send him to some stupid fellow, who, though he would give him wages, would yet teach him nothing, which is generally the case with journeymen.

I ASSURE you I have your interest sincerely at heart; and flatter myself that it is in my power to serve you, if you will allow me. I would therefore beg of you to write me as soon as possible, and communicate as much of your scheme of life to me as you think proper; and you may depend on my free and candid opinion, advice, or assistance, in all your undertakings. I think, in your last, you mentioned some people calling on you for copies of my Thesis. I left 100 with Mr MOORE, bookbinder; and if a few of them were stitched in marbled paper, you might give them to any particular acquaintance of yours and mine, whom one could not handsomely refuse; but I should not like to be too free with them, as it savours of ostentation.

I WOULD have wrote you more particularly; but not knowing whether you were dead or alive, as I have really been apprehensive for some time past that some accident had befallen you, I shall say no more at present, but that I am, as ever, your affectionate friend,

W. BUCHAN.

No. XLIX.

Dr William Buchan *to Mr* William Smellie.

Ackworth, Monday, 18th January 1762.

Dear Willie,

I had the favour of a letter from you some time ago; since which I wrote you, and expected to have heard from you before now; as I really wanted, for an extremely good reason, to know if you intend to practise physic; and must, in the ministerial style, insist upon a categorical answer. The reason you shall know by and by*. I should also like to know what classes you attend, and if there is any thing new stirring among you this session.

If you attend Cullen, you will find him much more ingenious in fishing for difficulties and starting doubts, than in solving them; and, when he has roused your whole

* This is obviously a hint at his intended publication, Domestic Medicine, of which hereafter.

soul into curiosity and expectation, and you are just gaping to hear the solution of some fine problem, all that you are to expect is, "That we are not yet in a capacity for determining this matter." At this declaration, methinks I see you bite your nails, and curse the shallowness of human genius. But soft and fair, say I; perhaps it is as well that we don't know more, as that we don't know less.—*Vide* Essay on Man.

I INTENDED to have written some little essays this winter, some of the subjects, I think, I hinted to you; but since that time I have plunged so effectually into practice, that I verily believe the theory of physic may sink or swim for me, as, although no man loves it more, yet I find the practice is the more profitable part.

I SHALL be glad to hear that the Newtonian Society flourishes; and beg you will make my compliments to all the members of it that I have the honour to be acquainted with. If I get to Edinburgh before it rises, I shall do myself the pleasure of waiting upon them; and if I can think of any subject new, or that may be worthy of their atten-

tion, I hope they will indulge me in delivering it, as I had no time last winter to think of philosophical matters.

I AM not at all surprised at your account of Mr BULLERS behaviour, as tyrants are commonly cringers; and as to his choice of a subject, you know it must be out of the usual road, otherwise below his notice. But I really believe Arteriotomy will have the same fate with the brush described by HEISTER for cleaning the stomach. Its use may be demonstrated, but few will ever dare to put it in practice: and, indeed, should it be attempted by one of a thousand who practise physic, more mischief would ensue from its use than is ever likely to happen from its neglect.

I WOULD advise you by all means to attend MONRO; as anatomy is a subject you can never know too much of, if you practise physic; and if you don't attend the public lecture, I would at least have you endeavour to be with JACK at night, during the time the subject is in hands. I take young MONRO to be quite an expert anatomist. CULLEN is clever, and does not want for genius, but

has his head full of theory and vague hypothesis. WHYTE will afford you the greatest satisfaction imaginable, being both ingenious and solid. RUTHERFORD is slow, but absolutely sure.

IF you are not a member of the Medical Society, I would advise you to enter immediately; as one never fails to pick up something in these clubs, let them be ever so stupid. As I cannot entertain you with any new piece of theory, I hope you won't be disobliged if I should just mention a history or two, to shew you a little of my success in practice. * * * * * * * * * *

I BEG of you to write me soon; and give your letter to my wife, who will take care to send it in a frank. Yours, &c.

W. BUCHAN.

THE person alluded to in the foregoing letter, under the name of JACK, was Mr JOHN INNES, long dissector to the Professor of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh. This gentleman used to give every evening a private repetition of the anatomical demon-

strations, to the students who attended the public class, and who were disposed to avail themselves of this excellent means for impressing a knowledge of the structure of the human body on their memories. This useful institution still continues under Mr Fyfe, the successor of Mr Innes in the office of dissector. The fee given to the professor, for attending the public lectures, is three guineas for each course; that to the dissector, for the private demonstrations, is one guinea. The professor at that period was the present Dr Alexander Monro, senior, whose eldest son, Dr Alexander Monro, junior, has now been for a good many years his assistant and successor; and who has added a course of lectures upon the morbid anatomy of the human body to the former customary academical course of medical education. It may be here remarked, that the chair of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh has now been occupied for near a century by Dr Alexander Monro, senior, and his father of the same name, who was appointed professor in 1719.

In the original of the foregoing letter from Dr Buchan, he communicated to his

friend Mr SMELLIE two cases of wonderful cures which he had performed in his private practice; but which it has not been thought necessary to insert.

No. L.

Dr WILLIAM BUCHAN *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Ackworth, 10*th July* 1762.

DEAR SMELLIE,

A PRODIGIOUS hurry of business has both prevented your hearing from me, and also retarded my journey to Edinburgh for some time past.

I HOPE you wont take it amiss if, after so long silence, I should say nothing farther than that, GOD willing, I flatter myself with once more having the pleasure of seeing you, and all my Edinburgh friends, soon. I shall set off in a few days; and expect to reach Auld Reikie about the 16th instant. I desire you will hold yourself in readiness for a journey, as I don't fear soon convincing you

of your capacity for the practice of Apollos art, and shall be answerable for the success. Believe me, &c.

W. Buchan.

The letters from Dr Buchan to Mr Smellie, so far as we have hitherto reached, have continued very much on general topics. In the subsequent portion, however, of this correspondence, we find another and nearer interest arising in the Doctors mind, and for the advancement of which he more eagerly urged the young philosophical corrector to abandon the setting up of types and correction of foul proofs for the regular study of medicine. Whatever may have been the motive, it certainly succeeded in making Mr Smellie an excellent scholar on all the topics connected with the healing art, and even with the theory of medicine. It induced him to give a marked attention to the study of natural history in all its branches, to which he became ever afterwards much devoted, qualifying him for the excellent translation of Buffon, which he afterwards executed, and for the composition of those lectures which he proposed to have read,

and a considerable portion of which were actually published, upon the Philosophy of Natural History; and it enabled him to become afterwards essentially useful to the Doctor, in aiding him in the composition and publication of his Domestic Medicine.

No. LI.

Mr William Smellie *to Dr* Buchan.

Dear Sir, 1762.

I am greatly indebted to you for communicating the curious cases contained in your letter, and more so for the obliging invitation of coming to stay with you. Ever since I enjoyed the pleasure of your acquaintance, I have had the strongest proofs of your friendship; and I find that neither absence nor difference of situation have in the smallest degree impaired the goodness or generosity of your heart. Would that I were able to make you some other return, than barely that of gratitude. It is altogether impracticable, I am afraid, to comply with your intentions at present; and I wish

I did not see several obstacles which make me entertain doubts of the success of such a scheme in any future period. I doubt nothing either with regard to your care or capacity to instruct me. But, supposing even I were arrived at the degree of a tolerable surgeon; yet, when I consider my situation in life, together with the disposition and temper of my mind, it comes to be a question with me, whether or not I could benefit myself by it. I am equally destitute of money and impudence; two great sources of wealth and reputation. Any booby with a little brass in his face and a doctoreal peruke, &c. would cut a much better figure either in town or country than your most humble servant. However, we shall try to canvass this subject more fully when you come to Edinburgh.

In one of his lectures some days ago, Dr Cullen said that coralines, spunges, &c. which were formerly supposed to be vegetable substances, were now considered as entirely the production of gregarious animals; and away he ran, without saying a syllable more on the subject. The devil twist your Doctorships nose about, thinks I, for I had much

rather that you had not mentioned it at all. Now the things I want are the *quomodos?* how? what? and so forth. I would be glad to have a solution of this knotty point.

If you can have any opportunity of being served with the London Chronicle, I would recommend it to you as the only newspaper in Britain that is worth the paying for. If you cannot get it with ease, I imagine the Edinburgh Journal, which is a weekly paper, and contains the substance of the news for the week, will be the most proper for your purpose. Advise me with regard to this in your next. I had the satisfaction of seeing Mrs Buchan last night in very good health. Yours, &c.

William Smellie.

No. LII.

Dr William Buchan *to Mr* William Smellie.

Dear Smellie,

I had your letter some time ago without date *, so can't tell whether it came in due

* In this letter the Doctor complains of the want of date; yet the original of this very letter, now in the hands of Mr Alexander Smellie, has no date either of time or place. From its

course or not: but you must excuse me if I should tell you that your truly whimsical notion of modesty seems to me quite romantic. I never thought you impudent; but am perfectly sure you never will be a loser by your modesty in the medical profession, as I don't think you possessed of that quality to a fault, and a man never loses by the appearance of it. If you have no other objection to the medical profession but your innate modesty, I desire you never to think of that more, as I shall be answerable for your success if that proves the only impediment; and I think I have gone pretty far to remove any other objection which you can possibly start. Impudence may introduce a man, but real merit must secure his success in the practice of medicine; and this, if I mistake not, is the case all over the world. The qualifications which you seem to wish so much to be possessed of, might, I own, do very well to fit a man for the stage as a quack; but can never be supposed necessary for a regular physician, unless you suppose

subject, it must have been written about 1762, at the time when Mr SMELLIE was led by the advice of some of his friends to the idea of studying medicine, with a view to a change of profession. The Doctor was then in business as a physician at Sheffield.

us all to be a parcel of brazen-faced rascals together.

I DESIRE my compliments to all friends; and beg of you to write me soon, and let me know your final resolution as to medicine. Excuse hurry and inaccuracy; and believe me to be, as ever, yours sincerely,

W. BUCHAN.

No. LIII.

Dr WILLIAM BUCHAN *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Sheffield, 29th February 1764.

DEAR SMELLIE,

AFTER long silence, which has been occasioned more by hurry and bustle about business than by indifference, I hope you will excuse my troubling your repose once more, by desiring you to acquaint me with your present situation, and what future scheme you have in your head, as I can't help feeling a sort of secret wish for your welfare; and I assure you, flattery aside, that it will

not a little add to my present happiness to hear that you are so.

I HAVE at length fixed upon a town where I think it not improbable that I shall end my days in quality of a physician, viz. Sheffield, a large, populous, and growing place, abounding with trade and money.

I SPENT some time in London last winter; but neither can nor will give you any particulars till I hear from you, which I wish to do immediately for sundry reasons; and you may expect in course a whole packet of news, and two or three trifling commissions, from yours, &c.

W. BUCHAN.

THE Doctor seems now to have maturated his scheme of the Domestic Medicine; and, feeling his need of literary aid, endeavours to recal the intimacy with Mr SMELLIE which he had allowed for some time to fall asleep, as he had not been able to prevail upon him to become his humble companion and subservient drudge.

No. LIV.

Dr William Buchan *to Mr* William Smellie.

Dear Smellie, *Sheffield. No date.*

I had your favour of the 20th ult. and I reckon myself deeply indebted to you for sending me so full a packet of news, especially with regard to the University. Your account of the challenge entertains me much; but I am afraid you have not stated the case fairly, as ****** certainly would not challenge *Chinny* without a great deal of provocation; and to tell you truly I never admired ***** good manners. I am sorry that ***** has lost his popularity, as I think he deserves well of the learned world, at least of the medical world, and I wish I could say as much for the other. Don't you think ***** was very bold to venture a substance against a shade?

I cannot make out from your account whether Dr Humes pamphlet on the *Croup*

is wrote in Latin or English. If in the former, I think *Suffocatio Stridula* a very proper name; but if he translates that into *Croup*, he may keep his pamphlet at home; for I have never met with any one in England, either medical people or others, who called the disease by that name. Though that disorder is very common here, yet should one speak of the croup to a Yorkshire man, he would believe you either meant the rump of a fowl, or the buttocks of a horse. The disease, however, is by no means sufficiently understood; and I should be extremely glad to be possessed of any good performance on the subject. Betwixt you and I, it does not matter a pin what name any man gives a disorder, provided he points out the symptoms accurately, and proposes a rational method of cure.

I am extremely sorry to hear of poor Dr Whytes deplorable situation, as I think his death would be a real loss to the University and to learning in general. I have not yet seen his new book, but I have read some extracts from it in the magazines. I promise myself a good deal of satisfaction from the perusal of his performances, especially as the

diseases on which he treats make almost one half of our business here; but I think the task too great for any one man; and am afraid the Doctor has hurt his own nerves by endeavouring to preserve those of other people.

Your strictures upon Linnaeus were, I dare say, well supported; and I am glad they had such happy consequences. I know Mr Dalrymple very well, and always looked upon him as an ingenious gentleman. I am glad you have found so good a friend, as I take him to be a person of a good deal of honour.

Your observations on Lord Kames I can say nothing about, as I never saw the work which occasioned them; but I think his Lordships conduct implies that they were just, at least in his opinion, and no body was so likely to think them otherwise. I am glad his Lordship took them in good part; and I should think it much your interest to cultivate his friendship. I have a high opinion of his integrity, which is the great point in a friend. I think you are quite in the right not to push my Lord, nor would I

have you to trust too much to his or any mans friendship, as you are more certain to meet with kindness if you don't ask it, or seem not to stand in need of it, than if you do either. The world is extremely capricious now-a-days, especially the great; and he who would use their interest must take care to ride very gently, and to use the spur with great caution. You see I am so much of a Yorkshire man as not to be able to write without borrowing my ideas from horses, jockies, &c.

I HAVE long looked on matrimony as a necessary ingredient in human happiness; for which cause you have no reason to suppose that I shall think the worse of you for having taken that step. I heartily wish you all happiness; and shall be glad to know the happy woman. I am so far from thinking matrimony a clog to any man, that I look upon it as a spur to a virtuous mind; and to me, at least, it is no small inducement to industry that the effects of it tend to the ease and happiness of those for whom I feel the strongest affection. I am glad to hear that HOPE is so much your friend, as I really believe him to be a good

sort of a man, and one who wishes well to mankind in general.

So much for your letter. You see I have only left one page for myself; and I am determined to fill it up, as you desire measure for measure.

As to your hint, I understand it very well; and, if you will put it in my power, I am determined not to be behind hand with any of your friends. Whether the manner in which I mean to serve you will suit or not, I cannot say, but shall be glad to have your opinion of it. The plan is this. I intend to print my performance here, as it is a popular one, by subscription in weekly numbers; and I may afterwards do the same at London and Edinburgh. Now, it is no easy matter, you know, for a person in practice to be able to find time both for *writing* and *correcting;* and, if you could make it suit your conveniency to come up here for a few weeks, and lend me a hand at the time of printing, I should not only esteem it a great favour, but will engage to give you L.100, not in *loan*, but as a *reward*, provided you can stay long enough, besides the preference of

printing my work at Edinburgh, which I flatter myself might turn out to good account. You certainly think I am very vain of my performance; but you will find that I am not so vain a parent as you may imagine; only I think I have hit upon something that will sell.

I CANNOT fix upon the time when I should want you up, as the subscription is just now about to be opened; but, as I have given you the hint, I beg your opinion of it in course, and you shall hear more of the particulars. I have sundry other *reasons* for wishing to see you here, besides what I have mentioned, and I am greatly mistaken if the journey do not turn out to your *account*. I intended, if you had not been settled in business, to have given you an invitation to my house for a year or so, by way of looking about you; and I believe had that happened, you would not have fixed in Edinburgh. But as it is, a *jaunt* cannot hurt you, as your partner can look after the business; and it must *pass* in your town that you are gone up to London on AFFAIRS RELATING TO BUSINESS; and to make this strictly true, you shall visit the capital before your return.

But my paper is done before I have got the affair properly opened. Pray write me in course; and you shall have another sheet with the scheme at large. Yours, &c.

W. Buchan.

It is difficult to explain some of the rather vague allusions employed by Dr Buchan in the foregoing letter, and which delicacy has even induced us to render less obvious. Dr Cullen was for many years one of the brightest luminaries and ablest supporters of the high fame of the medical school in the University of Edinburgh; and, quite contrary to the observation of Dr Buchan, was a man universally known and esteemed for great suavity of manners. The other person alluded to was a gentleman of much genius, knowledge, and industry; and had recently brought out a very useful work on medicine. It unfortunately happened that Dr Cullen, in one of his prelections, made use of some expressions which were conceived to convey an insinuation against the authenticity of the facts contained in the publication of the other learned Doctor; to whom the expressions, perhaps exaggerated

in their recital, were reported by some busy body. Conceiving his honour and veracity attacked in the tenderest point, the indignant author is said to have sent a challenge to the professor; but the dispute fell to the ground without the effusion of blood.

In one of the paragraphs of this letter, Dr Buchan is rather fastidiously hypercritical in his observations on the common Edinburgh name of the *Cynanche Trachealis* of nosologists. It has received its Scots name of *Croup* from a somewhat similar disease of the same name which is incident to poultry. In the north of England it is called the *stuffing;* which a Yorkshire man, in the same spirit of cavil with Dr Buchan, might be disposed to look for in the pannels of his saddle. After all, in his own favourite literary child, Domestic Medicine, the disease is named *Croup*.

From certain allusions in this letter, it seems highly probable that Mr Smellie had applied to his friend Dr Buchan for the loan of an hundred pounds, to enable him to set up in business for himself. The Doctor here affects to impress upon Mr Smellie, that his medical practice did not leave him sufficient

leisure to *correct* his intended medical work, and offers to give him *one hundred pounds* as a reward for correcting the *proof sheets* of an *octavo volume*. L.100 in these days were equal at this period to L.300. It has been already mentioned that we have no documents now remaining on which to found any estimate of the actual share which Mr SMELLIE had in the composition or correction of that work; and Dr WRIGHT was assuredly misinformed by Dr GILBERT STUART as to the whole work having been composed by Mr SMELLIE. Certain is, however, that Dr BUCHAN actually gave his bill for an hundred pounds to Mr SMELLIE, in payment of his services upon this occasion; and this bill is still in the hands of Mr JAMES GENTLE writer in Edinburgh. Mr SMELLIE collected, and procured to be collected, a considerable number of subscriptions for the book; and Dr BUCHAN made him responsible for the payment of all these subscriptions, by which Mr SMELLIE suffered a pecuniary loss of some moment, as a good many of the subscribers neglected to pay for their copies.

MR SMELLIES principal business appears to have been to reduce the exuberance of the work

within due bounds. Had it appeared before the world in its original prolixity, the sale must have been small indeed. At this period Dr Buchan resided in Sheffield; and, being afraid to have it known that Mr Smellie had gone into Yorkshire upon a visit to him, lest the *fact* might be *detected*, that he was employed, like Voltaire by the King of Prussia, to revise and amend his works, the Doctor urges him to give out that he was going to London; and even proposes a jesuitical salvo to save appearances. But, as it was utterly impossible for Mr Smellie to accept of this kind invitation without abandoning his recently begun business, the Doctor had to embrace the other alternative, of going himself to Edinburgh to have his work corrected and printed. As the mountain could not go to Mahomet, Mahomet went to the mountain. The Doctor accordingly came to Edinburgh, where the whole work underwent the correction of Mr Smellies pen and judgment.

No. LV.

To Mr William Smellie *from Dr* William Buchan.

Dear Smellie, *Sheffield, 15th Dec.* 1765.

I had your favour of the 30th ultimo; and you should have heard from me sooner, but for an ugly inflammation of my face, which made my eyes so weak I could not look upon paper. I thank God it is now quite gone; and I am again able to scribble as usual; so you may expect a whole sheet, provided this old broomstick of a shop pen be but able to go through with it; for, to tell you the truth, I am not at present master of a pen-knife to mend it with; which must appear a prodigious paradox, considering that I am situate amidst ten thousand cutlers.

I am sorry that I desired you to make bricks without allowing you straw; or, to speak more philosophically, required solutions without furnishing proper and sufficient data. But this blunder you must impute to my not

understanding the art about which I was writing. I am vain enough to think, had you wrote a medical case for my opinion, though you are far from being ignorant of that science, that I could have found as many flaws in your data as you very justly did in mine; but, be that as it may, your answer was quite satisfactory; at least, it contained all the material articles of information which I wanted*.

You seem startled at the supposition of 10,000 copies, without ever considering the old proverb, that chalk 's not cheese. I never said that I should print that number. I only asked you what such a number might be done for at Edinburgh, including paper, print, and stitching in blue paper covers. Now, where was the difficulty of your supposing the price of the paper, the length of the lines, and the number of lines in a page, all at a medium, and making your calculations accordingly?

You seem to have a strong inclination to know my subject; and indeed I think it hardly friendly to keep you in the dark about that;

* Here follows a long discussion about the quality and price of paper, which, being quite uninteresting, is omitted.

but there is not room now to say much about it; only, in general, it is a medical performance, calculated for general use; and is something in the manner of Dr Tissots Advice to the People, but upon a more general plan, and will, I hope, be more extensively useful. I am so far come to the cool part of life as to look upon publications which are not calculated for the good of mankind as a prostitution of talents, an abuse of time, and a gross imposition.

I forget whether I told you before, that the reason of my changing my plan of publication was the vast expence of time and trouble that I saw would attend the distribution of a numerous edition in weekly numbers; besides my being obliged to be upon the spot during the whole time of publishing, distributing, &c.

I propose sending you one of my proposals in a frank, as soon as I can get one; but would not have it mentioned at Edinburgh till I am there myself, for sundry reasons. It is a point which cannot yet be certainly determined what the size of the letter must be; because until we begin to print, I shall

either keep adding or altering somewhat. I once thought of using the same letter with that in which Dr Brookes Practice of Physic is printed; but I don't love it; and will have a larger if possible, as I think it gives a book a confused and mean look to be printed in too small a letter. What say you? I think the letter of Dr Homes Principia a very neat size, and could wish to use such a one, if my work would come in with it. If we use a *pica* letter, the pages must be as full as possible. Do you think forty lines in the page, and fifty letters in the line will be too many?

I could wish to be as soon as possible determined with regard to the place of printing, and must beg you to give me all the information you can in the affair. I think it would be a job of very great importance to you, as you are only beginners; and I own it would give me pleasure if I could be of service to you. I also imagine that I could have the work much more accurately done by you than by any person here; and I have sundry *reasons* for not chusing to print, at least the first edition, in London. You know it would be folly to be at the expence of printing an edition in London, which is all to come down to the

country: But at Edinburgh, I could stay both with more satisfaction and at a much smaller expence. I think I might pick up some useful hints at Edinburgh during my stay, which might be of service to my performance. Pray write me soon; and give me all the hints about the affair that you think proper. I shall also thank you for all news, literary, political, philosophical, &c. Yours, &c.

W. Buchan.

No. LVI.

To Mr William Smellie *from Dr* William Buchan.

Dear Smellie, *No date.*

Your favour of the 20th ultimo came duly to hand. I am glad to hear that you have tolerable success in collecting subscriptions, as that is an affair which I have greatly at heart; and must beg of you to leave no stone unturned in order to promote it. Your extensive acquaintance, especially among the youth in the literary way, will, I hope, be of great service in this affair. Youth is the season when

people are keen in undertaking, and generally ardent in pushing, whatever they take in hand. Their friendship is more warm, and their efforts to shew it more vigorous than those of age. I would, for this reason, have you to make use of the students of every denomination, and try to induce them to take half a dozen, in order to frank one for their own use. This, I find, goes greatly down among the peasantry of this part of the country; and I dare say most of your students in divinity will like this plan, as they can easily procure six subscriptions among their friends in the country. I have not so much hope from the students in physic, as I fear they will deem the publication an encroachment upon their prerogative; but of this they have no reason to be apprehensive, as the physicians province shall never be infringed by me. This is by no means the intent of my work, nor could I possibly be of service to mankind by decrying physicians. My plan, in one word, pray GOD prosper it, is this:—To put mankind on their guard against diseases by pointing out their causes, and likewise to show them how far it is in their power to remove slight disorders by the use of simple remedies.

I would have you to take particular care to recommend it to the clergy, as they are the most likely people to promote its sale and usefulness. If you can find means to convey one of the proposals to every minister of the Church of Scotland, and likewise to the dissenters, I shall be obliged to you, and shall not grudge any expence. If you can find an honest fellow whom you can depend upon, who is pretty well acquainted with the country, and has got somewhat to say for himself, I shall be obliged to you to employ him in collecting subscriptions. What Mr Ward allows here is ten shillings a-week; but I generally put the allowance upon the number of subscriptions procured, as that is an incitement to industry. What I allow is one shilling for each subscription. If I know the subscribers, or can depend upon the honesty of the person I employ, I give one half of this when he delivers in the names, and the other at the delivery of the book. This I think the better plan for sundry reasons. With regard to the time of publication, I generally tell people that it will be out next spring; but, for my own part, I think there will be no loss in delaying it as long as we can, for the following reasons: *First*, that no more copies

can be sold by subscription after the first publication; *second*, the extreme deadness of trade and consequent want of money at present, in these parts; *third*, the high price of provisions of all sorts. These two latter are reasons of much greater weight than you are aware of, and greatly influence the sale of any thing here. You must know, when trade is brisk, and provisions low, we are all brisk as Lords in this trading country; but when the contrary happens, we are as poor as rats or beggars.

I HAVE now teazed you to death about my book; and it is high time to talk of something else. I am very sorry that our good friend Mr HAMILTON has lost the class, as I think he would have been an honour to the chair, and might have proved of great use; and I think it a pity his genius should be thrown away on trade. Pray offer him my best respects; and I hope his lucky stars have reserved him for somewhat better. I had the pleasure of spending an evening very agreeably with our friend Mr MILLER at Doncaster, on his way to Edinburgh. I think him greatly improved both in his taste and humour, and was extremely happy in his

company. As I presume you see him frequently, you will please remember me to him, and I hope to have the pleasure of hearing him sing the Merry Ploughman over a bottle of claret before the end of October.

Nothing could have given me greater pleasure than the change I observed in ********. His former humour of turning every thing into ridicule made me apprehensive that he might do more mischief than good by his genius; but his serious and steady deportment now encourages me to hope for something very extraordinary from him, as I know him to be capable of doing something clever. You will not fail in making my compliments acceptable to him.

It would give me the greatest pleasure to be present at your Thursday-night meetings, especially as you are a select party, and all pure genii of the right sterling philosophical stamp; but that is a piece of happiness which I cannot at present enjoy. I hope, however, to see you in four weeks or so. You have my hearty wishes for success; but I can't see any reason for your depending so absolutely upon the approbation of Lord Kames.

I have reason to believe that, with many, the work, at least the moral part of it, will be better received without than with his approbation. Yours, &c.

W. Buchan.

P. S.—I shall never cut a figure at the bottom of a letter while I live, by squeezing my name into a corner. If you write soon after the receipt of this, I shall have the pleasure of hearing from you again before I come north; and pray, if you do write, give me at least measure for measure. The only fault of your letters is their ending too soon. Your apology of wanting matter is certainly the worst you could make for many reasons. But I must say little, as my errors are generally in the other extreme, and I find it just as easy to write a long letter about nothing as of something.

The concluding reflection in the foregoing letter alludes to a philosophical work which Mr Smellie then had in contemplation, and expresses a sentiment which does not do much honour to the Doctors judgment and penetration; the approbation of Lord Kames was most valuable to whoever had the honour and happiness to deserve and obtain it.

We now approach the more busy period of Mr Smellies life, when he became involved in the cares of providing for a family, and began to engage in literary projects for himself and others. In giving an account of the incidents of his life, and of his literary projects and adventures, it is hardly possible to follow any exact order of arrangement; at least, the several circumstances cannot be reduced to any exact chronological series. Several of the transactions which we shall have to record were the employment of successive years, and some of them were in a considerable degree simultaneous. It has therefore been judged most convenient to treat of each prominent circumstance separately, to prevent confounding persons, events, and subjects with each other; and it has been endeavoured to do this as much according to the order of time as circumstances and information would admit.

In one of the letters already inserted, it will be seen that Mr Smellie, though constantly employed in business, and much occupied with study, became deeply enamoured of a young lady with whom he had formed an acquaintance, and to whom he

was soon afterwards married. At the commencement of this attachment, he could not exceed twenty-two years of age; and the object of his affections was about seventeen. He was then corrector of the press to Messrs Murray & Cochrane, with a salary of about forty-two pounds a-year; and, with the usual sanguine ideas of youth and inexperience, flattered himself that this scanty income might enable him to encounter the cares and expences of domestic economy with decent comfort. In appreciating his probable income for these purposes, he quoted to his bosom friend and confident the considerable addition which his destined bride would bring to the domestic fund, by the profits of her industry, which he estimated at thirty pounds a-year. But he seems entirely to have left out of view the obstructions which might reasonably be expected to lessen her economical endeavours, through the necessary attention to domestic affairs, and, the probable consequence of matrimony, the cares of a rising family.

We have no memorials of the progress of this attachment, except that, from the letter already mentioned, it appears to have

been reciprocal; and all the eloquent prudence of his confidential friend was unavailing to persuade him to banish *anxious love* from his mind. In the year 1763, when about twenty-three years of age, Mr SMELLIE was married to Miss JEAN ROBERTSON, who was born in London, being the daughter of Mr JOHN ROBERTSON, an eminent army agent, a native of the shire of Cromarty. At one time, Mr ROBERTSON was agent for twelve regiments, and had realized a considerable fortune: but, in consequence of living extravagantly among the great military characters with whom he was connected by means of his employment, his circumstances became involved, and his family was reduced to indigence at his death. Mrs ROBERTSON, the mother of Mrs SMELLIE, was the daughter of a Mr HUGH MACDONALD. Her maternal grandmother was JANET SMART, the daughter of a very respectable family in Musselburgh. Mr ALEXANDER GRAY, one of the clerks of Session, was her uncle by marriage; and his son, Mr ALEXANDER ROSS GRAY, full cousin to Mrs SMELLIE, succeeded her father Mr ROBERTSON as an army agent, and acquired a great fortune. The present Mrs OSWALD of Dunikier is her full cousin, their mothers

having been sisters. Thus in marriage Mr Smellie connected himself very respectably; but his wife had no fortune; and however genteel her connexions, they never appear to have been of any service to her husband or family.

Of this marriage, Mr Smellie had thirteen children, six sons and seven daughters; of whom four sons and four daughters survived him in 1795: His widow, with two sons and four daughters, still survive. Mr Alexander Smellie, his second born but eldest surviving son, is married and has a family. His eldest daughter has been long married to Mr George Watson, an eminent portrait painter in Edinburgh, to whom she has a numerous family. The rest of Mr Smellies children remain unmarried. Although anticipating the order of time, it has been deemed most convenient to insert in this place such information respecting Mr Smellies family as have come to our knowledge, and have appeared proper to be noticed; that these incidental circumstances might not break in upon the various subjects of business and literature, which constitute the principal objects of attention in the sequel.

Mr Smellie was a most affectionate and very indulgent father to all his children, whom he hardly ever corrected with severity, except on occasions of any deviation from truth; as he always used his utmost endeavours to impress on their young minds a rigid adherence to truth, as the solid foundation of moral virtue and purity of character. To his third son Thomas, he was particularly partial, as he was of a remarkably docile and gentle disposition, exceedingly attentive to his education, and shewed strong and early indications of rising genius. Thomas had a particular talent for the acquisition of the learned languages, and much classical taste; and, in the course of his studies, in that department of literature, had completed an entire translation of the works of Tacitus into English; which his father, who was himself an excellent scholar, and a thorough judge of both languages, thought so well executed, that at one period he had almost determined to publish this version by his son. But in February 1795, the sanguine hopes he had fondly cherished of the future eminence of this promising youth were fatally blasted, by the effects of a malignant sore throat which then prevailed in

his family, but of which THOMAS was the only victim. Of this melancholy event Mr SMELLIE made the following communications to Mrs MARIA RIDDELL of Woodley Park in Dumfriesshire, and to the Author of these Memoirs.

No. LVII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to Mrs* MARIA RIDDELL.

Edinburgh, 19*th February* 1795.

DEAR MADAM,

FOR several weeks past, my family has been in a very sad condition. Five sons were all at once afflicted with dangerous sore throats. One of my sons, aged between nineteen and twenty, a good and useful young man, who, from his cradle to his grave, never vexed me, expired after an illness of five or six days. The rest, I hope, are in a state of convalescence. I am, &c,

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. LVIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to Mr* ROBERT KERR.

DEAR SIR, *Edinburgh, 28th February* 1795.

DURING the last four weeks, my family has been in a dreadful situation. Out of nine children, five were down at once in an abominable sore throat. As SHAKESPEARE says, *Poor Tom 's a-cold!* aged between nineteen and twenty. In five days illness, he has left this best of possible worlds. The others are now perfectly recovered.

I am, &c.

IT may not be impertinent to subjoin the answer which was returned to this last letter. Mr SMELLIE and its writer corresponded on business at the time, but that portion of the letter only which refers to the melancholy event communicated by Mr SMELLIE is here printed.

No. LIX.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from Mr* ROBERT KERR.

DEAR SIR, *Millbank, 2d March* 1795.

I HAVE heard of the distresses in your family with very sincere concern; and that poor TOM should have left this best of possible worlds, may be all for the best to him, but must be a very sensible loss to you in many respects. This world would be the best possible for us all, did we not exert all our powers and faculties to make it the worst. I have not room for a long dissertation, but I think it may be demonstrated, That all the evils in the moral world, and a very large proportion of those which are called physical, arise from mankind anxiously pursuing the road of unhappiness for themselves and others, while that of happiness is open to all, yet unpursued by any. This thesis is very ill expressed, but I have no spirits or leisure for nice discrimination. I am, &c.

ROBT. KERR.

THE death of this promising youth was attended by the following particularly distressing circumstance. He had gone to bed at night with every appearance of being considerably better, and was considered as in a fair way of recovery. HENRY SMELLIE, a younger brother, since deceased, who lay in the same bed with THOMAS, and was afflicted with the same disease, thought proper towards morning, for some reason now unknown, to endeavour to awaken his brother; when, to his indescribable astonishment and horror, he discovered that THOMAS lay dead beside him.

NOT long before his death, THOMAS SMELLIE became intimately acquainted with Mr ALEXANDER MURRAY, now minister of the parish of Urr, in the county of Dumfries, and Secretary for foreign correspondence to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries; who was then a young man about the same age, and had come from the country to prosecute his studies at the University of Edinburgh. They were introduced to each other by a journeyman printer; and a congeniality of talents and pursuits soon gave rise to a close intimacy between these young men.

The mature opinion and sentiments of attachment which Mr Murray still entertains respecting his long-departed friend were very recently expressed by him in the following letter.

No. LX.

To Mr Alexander Smellie *from the Rev.* Alexander Murray.

Dear Sir, *Urr, 3d September* 1810.

Your brother Thomas had made very considerable progress in Latin and Greek, and would have proved a fine scholar, if he had lived; being attached to literature for its own sake, which is often its only reward. The regard which I had for him was fully merited, if it had been worth ten thousand times its value, on account of his remarkably fine disposition, and the decided taste which he shewed for literature. I am, &c.

Alexander Murray.

It is difficult to speak with propriety of a living person, lest praise may appear as tending towards adulation, or the delicacy of the individual might be unintentionally offended: But we hope, without imputation of the one

or danger of the other consequence, it may be permitted to say, that Mr Murray is a rare instance of almost incredible, and certainly unusual attainments in literature and philology, though originally placed in peculiarly discouraging circumstances of situation, every way adverse for eliciting or promoting his uncommon talents. Altogether unknown and destitute of patronage, and barely possessing the means of subsistence, that gentleman became in very early youth, entirely by his own exertions, and in a wonderfully short time, complete master of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. While living in an obscure situation in the country, almost without any assistance whatever, for he is said to have been only three months at school, and hardly able to procure even the most ordinary elementary books, he is reported to have made himself master of seven languages, before he was twenty years of age.

While engaged in theological studies at Edinburgh, he acquired a thorough knowledge of Hebrew, and of the allied dialects or languages, Chaldee, Samaritan, Syriac, and Arabic; and extended his researches into Persic, German, Dutch, Spanish, and even Gaelic. Having been employed for some

time as editor of the Scots Magazine, by Messrs Constable and Co. eminent and spirited booksellers in Edinburgh, he undertook in their service the superintendance of a new edition of the celebrated Travels of Bruce into Abyssinia, with considerable additions from the papers of that adventurous traveller. To qualify himself effectually for this purpose, he made himself in a great degree a proficient in the Ethiopic or Abyssinian language, which is a dialect of the Arabic; or rather consists of two principal dialects, the Geez, or language of Tigré, and the Amharic, or court language of Abyssinia, since the seat of government has been established at Gondar in Amhara. Mr Murray appears to have entered considerably into the study of the barbarous languages, or dialects of the subjects and neighbours of the Abyssinian monarchy, named the Falashan, Gafat, Agow, and Tcherets-Agow; and even to have acquired some knowledge of that spoken by the savage Galla.

In the prosecution of his philological studies, Mr Murray has carefully examined and made himself master of all the principal dialects or languages of Europe, ancient as well as modern, including, besides those

which are derived from the Latin, those of Teutonic, Sclavonic, and Celtic origin; and such is the facility with which he acquires languages, a task so difficult and irksome to most men, that we are credibly informed he is capable to surmount the obstacles in the way of acquiring any language whatever in one month, so as to understand its grammatical construction and idiomatic phraseology, and to be able to translate from it with accuracy. Mr MURRAY has by no means devoted this extraordinary talent for the acquisition of languages to the barren delight of storing up words and phrases for his own private amusement; but has announced a philosophical work on this curious subject to the public, in which he proposes to trace the affinities and origin of the Greek and Latin languages from one much more simple, regular, and ancient, which he considers as the basis or root of almost all the languages of Europe, ancient as well as modern, and even of the Sanscrit. The title of this intended work, which is said to have been nearly ready for the press two years ago, is, Researches into the Origin and Affinity of the Greek and Teutonic Languages; and which we have some reason to believe may be put to press before the present work comes before

the public.—The Author of these Memoirs makes no pretensions to philological learning; yet presumes to allege, that it is impossible to investigate the filiation of any language or leading dialect, without a competent knowledge of all those which are geographically and historically connected by neighbourhood or colonization. Philologists have generally confined their researches to one or two favourite languages, from which they endeavour to deduce the roots of that which is the object of their investigation. Mr Murray appears to have chosen a wider field, by securing a previous knowledge of all the sources of derivation, and their intermediate steps; and much curious information may be expected from his labours.

We have already inserted the high sense which Mr Murray still retains of the character and talents of his departed friend Mr Thomas Smellie; whose untimely fate he very feelingly and elegantly deplored in the following elegiac stanzas, which were composed immediately after the melancholy event. Having been originally printed on a loose sheet, their intrinsic poetical merit, and the occasion of their composition, call irresistibly for their insertion in this place.

ELEGY

ON

Mr THOMAS SMELLIE,

FOURTH SON OF THE LATE MR WILLIAM SMELLIE,

F. R. S. & F. A. S.

Ostendent terris HUNC *tantùm fata, nec ultrà*
Esse sinent. ÆNEID, Lib. vi. 870.

Gray weeping vaults, and lonely mould'ring domes,
From whose dim walls the very sculptures die;
In whose cold, dark, and ever silent wombs
The dear, the good, the great, the honour'd lie!

Thou hear'st not, object of my bursting heart!
O first to hear when sorrow was the theme,
Ere swiftly flew the sure unerring dart
That bade my bliss be like a morning dream!

Fair faithless hopes, by fond illusions fed,
How soon you've past, unconstant and unkind!
The grass is waving on thy lowly bed,
And I am solitary here behind.

How oft deluded Expectation said—
"Long be the light of Friendship's holy flame";
A thousand happy scenes she then pourtray'd
In dreams of future years and future fame.

But, like a keen and all-subduing blast,
That wastes the harvest ere the harvest day,
Thy heavy death o'er expectation past,
And all my happiness fled far away.

The morn arises in her orient bloom;
I feel no joy at her approaching light:
And darkness falling, with its dreary gloom,
No longer brings the comforts of the night.

Now clos'd that eye whose brightest beams have shone!
No tears can animate the lifeless clay:
No grief can 'wake to life the crumbling bone,
Nor give the faded form again to day.

Cold envious Grave! within thy barren breast
The early ray of genius sank and died,
And all the virtues in oblivion rest;
No more of friends the early hope and pride.

Nor had the morn of life her midway bound
Approach'd with him, through fields of summer's dew,
Till deep and fatal darkness veil'd her round,
And quench'd her azure light with midnight's hue.

At friendship's call, at pity's bursting tear,
No more thy bosom feels the generous glow;
Nor melts that heart when misery's form is near,
That ever keenly felt a brother's woe.

Dark winter's storms, and April's faithless gales,
And gay green Summer, with her flow'ry head,
And Autumn, waving o'er her golden dales,
Shall waft no pleasure to thy silent bed.

Ah! never dawns all blest Remembrance there,
Nor young Sensation beams in living light;
Destruction's banners fan the mortal air,
And all is horror there, and all is night!

Why gone so soon? With undivided race,
Our faithful steps had trac'd the painful way;
To the cold grave had mov'd in equal pace!
But thou art gone before th' appointed day!

Too good, too dear, with ev'ry virtue blest,
Friend of my heart, for ever from me fled!
O where, in yon all-hallow'd land of rest,
Lift'st thou on high thy mild, thy honour'd head?

Escap'd from trouble sore and wasting care,
From age's pang, and sorrow's fatal wound,
Fann'st thou, aloft the bright ethereal air,
Where endless happiness enfolds thee round.

O! if to fields of never-fading light
A sigh may come, where peaceful spirits dwell,
Return one moment to my aking sight,
Then, for a little, gentle shade, farewell!

I come apace—nor long I wait behind;
Short is the journey to our kindred clay:
Soon shall we meet, and parting never find,
And death and sorrow vanish both away.

O'er thy green turf, each slow revolving year,
I'll heave the sigh to early merit due;
And dreary add poor friendship's sacred tear,
For ne'er was one more hapless, nor more true.

Mr Smellies third son, John, chose to become a seaman. He first sailed for two years in the merchant service from Leith, in the Bacchus, commanded by Lieutenant Elder of the Royal Navy, brother to the late Thomas Elder, Esq. Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and Deputy Postmaster General for Scotland. John afterwards made a China voyage, as midshipman in the Lord Macartney, commanded by Captain Hay, son of Sir James Hay of Haystone, Bart. M. D. He then, in 1790, became a midshipman in the Collossus line of battle ship, commanded by the Honourable Captain Christian; and served afterwards as masters mate in the Hind frigate, then on the Scots station, and commanded by the Honourable Captain Cochrane, now Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, Knight of the Bath. This gallant admiral has atchieved, in the present war, a triumph which never before graced the annals of British naval glory:—*He has not left a hostile flag in the seas of the western world!* In conjunction with General Beckwith, he has likewise completely expelled the French from the whole of their possessions in the West Indies; and is now governor of Guadaloupe, the last of these brilliant conquests. John

SMELLIE died at Sheerness, in October 1799, commander of a gun-vessel.

IN endeavouring to procure employment for his son JOHN, the following letters passed between Mr SMELLIE and Mr PATRICK CLASON. Of this gentleman we regret that so little is known to us, and that so small a remnant of the correspondence which seems to have taken place between him and Mr SMELLIE is now to be found. We have been informed, on good authority, that Mr CLASON was, or rather is, an excellent scholar, and a gentleman of abilities and considerable literary attainments; for we have reason to believe that he is still alive, and resides in London. According to our information, he was originally educated for the ministry in the Church of Scotland; but had devoted the prime of his life to the employment of a travelling tutor. That portion of the correspondence between him and Mr SMELLIE which still remains is quite abrupt. It is probable that Mr SMELLIE had recommended his son JOHN to the attentions of Mr CLASON, who evidently appears to have been one of his contemporaries and companions at the University of Edinburgh. It farther appears that, in the course of this correspondence, Mr CLASON had made

inquiries at Mr Smellie respecting the health of Dr Adam Smith, the immortal author of the Wealth of Nations; a book greatly more celebrated and admired than understood; and the principles which it inculcates and establishes, though almost universally acknowledged to be just and irrefragable, are still successfully opposed by the narrow mercantile system of monopoly, and the bigotted terror which actuates many respectable characters against every appearance of innovation and reform. The first of these letters is peculiarly characteristic, and partly biographical; and, having no direct connexion with any of Mr Smellies literary exertions, except an incidental allusion to the first volume of his Philosophy of Natural History, is therefore inserted in this place.

No. LXI.

Mr William Smellie *to Mr* Patrick Clason.

Dear Clason, *Edinburgh, 27th June* 1790.

I really do not know how to thank you sufficiently for your attention and kindness to my son John. I believe I have now disco-

vered the mode that will best suit your humane disposition. I hope to see the young man, by your means, in a situation that will give you pleasure.

Poor Smith! We must soon lose him; and the moment in which he departs will give a heart-felt pang to thousands. Mr Smiths spirits are flat; and I am afraid the exertions he sometimes makes to please his friends do him no good. His intellects, as well as his senses, are clear and distinct. He wishes to be cheerful; but nature is omnipotent. His body is extremely emaciated, because his stomach cannot admit of sufficient nourishment: But, like a man, he is perfectly patient and resigned.

O Peter! What is this world? I have laboured incessantly upwards of thirty years, and have reaped nothing but distress and calamity. I have brought thirteen human beings into existence, perhaps, though God forbid, to be as miserable as myself. These ideas are dismal.

Have you read my book? As you must be in habits with literary men, it is natural

for me to wish to know your own opinion and theirs.

NOTHING in the way of literature is going on here. There is a bustle about elections; but these I never mind. If any thing occur that will either serve or please you, lay your commands upon me. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. LXII.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from Mr* PATRICK CLASON.

London, 6. *July* 1790.
No. 5 *Cleveland Court*, *St Jameses.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Informed by your son that he was in want of money, I trembled lest he should lose his birth; and hastened to my banker, though already in arrears to him, from whom I procured some money for poor JOHN; for which he gave a draft upon you, payable to me or order on demand. *Haud ignara* (sentiment has no peculiar gender) *mali miscris*, &c.

Finding, to my real sorrow, that your industry and talents have not been rewarded, I shall keep the bill till you find a moment favourable for discharging it; for I should feel more than the ordinary pain of dunning, in being a *dun* to you.

The news you give of Mr Smith alarms and afflicts me severely. Were he known to me only by his works, I should even then esteem his death a greater loss to the world than would be sustained by that of any other literary man, indeed of any man in Europe. But he has been long my friend; and I feel that I shall mourn more bitterly for the good friend than for the great man. Fain, O! fain would I still hope—his constitution is good, and, except by study, he never has done any thing to hurt it, and study never kills. I hope Dr Black visits him.—I hope —I hope.—I beg you will now and then take the trouble, for which I will be grateful, of sending me an account of his situation. My mind is thrown into cruel derangement when I think of him.

I have not yet had an opportunity to read your book: but, as soon as some volumes

before me are perused, I mean to take up yours. I rejoice in being able to inform you, that good judges have spoken to me very advantageously of your work.

Do you ever see Dr Samuel Charters, Mr Gray? To them, and to all our common friends who recollect me, I beg you to remember me kindly. My best respects to Mrs Smellie, and my blessings on her *bairns*. With great regard and esteem, I am, &c.

Patrick Clason.

We have lately had occasion to notice the decisive step which was taken by Mr Smellie in 1763, by entering into the state of matrimony while only a corrector of the press; and have now to mention his first establishment in life, or setting up in business as a master, which took place about two years afterwards. On the 25th of March 1765, when about twenty-five years of age, Mr Smellie commenced business as a master printer at Edinburgh, in conjunction with Mr William Auld, who appears to have been one of his companions when an apprentice, though older than himself; probably,

from some expressions in one of his letters, formerly inserted, a journeyman, or far advanced apprentice, at the time when Mr SMELLIE first entered to the profession with Messrs HAMILTON, BALFOUR, and NEILL. The copartnership on the present occasion consisted of Mr ROBERT AULD, writer in Edinburgh, Mr WILLIAM AULD, printer, his brother, and Mr SMELLIE; and from circumstances mentioned in some letters which have not been deemed of sufficient interest to require insertion, it seems probable that this new company was formed upon the dissolution of a former partnership between the Messrs AULDS and a Mr RUDDIMAN, perhaps of the family of the famous grammarian of that name, formerly librarian to the Faculty of Advocates.

As Mr SMELLIE began the world entirely destitute of patrimony, and as we have already seen that he gave himself an extensive University education out of his wages, besides contributing materially to the maintenance of two sisters, it is not to be supposed that he could have saved any money for the purchase of his proportion of the types, presses, and other implements of the business. He accordingly needed assistance from his

friends on this occasion; and we find, from the subsequent letter, that he was encouraged to this important step by the friendly patronage of two worthy members of the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh, the late Dr JOHN HOPE, Professor of Botany, formerly mentioned with deserved respect, and Dr JAMES ROBERTSON, late Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh, who conjunctly advanced L.70 to enable him to complete the necessary arrangements in the bargain with the Messrs AULDS. Mr SMELLIE studied Hebrew for the sole purpose of correcting Dr ROBERTSONS Grammar.

DR ROBERTSON was a very worthy and most respectable person, who, though bred to the ministry of the Church of Scotland, and an ordained minister, never possessed a charge of souls. He had made great attainments in the knowledge of Hebrew, and the connected languages or dialects, Samaritan, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, and even in the modern Persic; and long taught the Hebrew class in the University with great respectability. He was the author of a very learned grammar of the Hebrew, which he taught as conjoined with the Masoretic points: But one upon a more

simple plan, and without points, by the late Professor CHARLES WILSON of St Andrews, has now mostly superseded the more recondite performance of Dr ROBERTSON.

DR ROBERTSON died in 1795; and is buried in the Westkirk church-yard, where a monument was erected to his memory, with a very elegant Latin inscription, by the present Dr DANIEL ROBERTSON professor of Hebrew, St Andrews. He is mentioned in the inscription as *eximius patronus studiosorum atque egenorum, &c.*

AS Mr SMELLIE found the sum of L.70 by no means adequate for carrying on the printing business in an efficient manner, he made application about this time to a third person, with whom he seems to have been but slightly acquainted, requesting a farther advance of twenty or thirty pounds to enlarge his scanty funds. There is no remaining memorandum of the name of the person to whom this letter was addressed, neither is there any date in the copy: But it must have been written about the end of March or beginning of April 1765; as he mentions having entered into this copartnery only a

few days before it was written. Even the event of the application is unknown.

No. LXIII.

Mr William Smellie *to* ********.

Dear Sir, 1765.

It will undoubtedly surprise you to receive a letter of this nature from a person who can boast of no farther acquaintance than what is acquired by the conversation of an hour or two.

A few days ago, I signed a contract of copartnery with Mr Robert Auld, writer, and Mr William Auld printer in Edinburgh. I should not have done so, had I not been encouraged by Dr Hope and Professor Robertson, whom I can never too much love. But, although these gentlemen have assisted me to the extent of L.70, that, in my way, is, I find still insufficient for the purpose. Twenty or thirty pounds more would, by the assistance of industry and frugality, in all human probability, put me in such a way as to enable me both to live decently, and, in a year or two, to return

the money to my generous friends with a grateful heart.

I was with Lord Kames on Wednesday last. He at that time, as he has often done, was pleased to assure me of his friendship and patronage in every circumstance in life; desiring me to inform him frankly whenever I happened to be embarrassed, and he would endeavour to assist me. Had his Lordship at this time seen my heart, he would there have discovered a curious struggle between false modesty and real necessity. But the former prevailed; and, notwithstanding his Lordships benevolent intentions, I was obliged to return without uttering a single word concerning my private affairs.

Now, Sir, I shall be very unhappy if the first letter of the kind I ever wrote in my life, I hope it may be the last, should not only prove unsuccessful, but should likewise give offence: Let me therefore beg security against the latter. I am, &c.

William Smellie.

P. S.—If this letter meets not with your approbation, pray commit it to the flames; if

otherwise, preserve it as a mark of disinterestedness on your part, and a strong motive of gratitude on mine.

In the year 1765, Mr Smellie was attracted by what appeared to him a very disingenious attack in the Monthly Review on the metaphysical principles of the celebrated Dr Reid of Glasgow, the author of a new System of Pneumatology, founded on the dictates of common sense, or plain and unadulterated human reason, in opposition to the reveries of the sophists and school-men, who had so long usurped the name of philosophers. Our young printer, then about twenty-five years of age, resolved to try his hand in defending the principles of this new philosophy, which is founded on the true basis of induction, by attempting to prove the fallacy and false reasoning by which an anonymous writer in the Monthly Review had endeavoured to shew its absurdity, and sent the following answer to the editors of that long established and respectable work; which we think requires insertion, both as one of the first serious productions of Mr

SMELLIES pen, and because it possesses considerable intrinsic merit.

No. LXIV.

To the AUTHORS *of the* MONTHLY REVIEW;
A Letter from Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.

GENTLEMEN, *Edinburgh, 12th August* 1765.

NOT pretending to make the publication of this letter a criterion of your candour or regard to truth, I proceed to make a few observations on S. C.'s remarks upon Dr REIDS Inquiry into the Human Mind, published in your Review of June last; the fate of which I freely resign to your own determination.

THIS author begins his remarks with animadverting on the title of Dr REIDS performance. "An Inquiry into the Human Mind, *on the Principles of Common Sense*," says he, "is a strange inconsistency. For *common sense*, in its general acceptation, means the opinions entertained by the generality of mankind, or the *unlearned;* and a man would be just as successful who would

attempt to shew that the perceptions, operations, and faculties of the mind are agreeable to the common notions of mankind, as if he should attempt to prove the same of the positions and revolutions of the planets." Without inquiring into the propriety or impropriety of this definition of common sense, it is sufficient to say, that it is totally different from Dr Reids idea of that quality of the human mind. There are undoubtedly certain principles which, from the constitution of our nature, we must necessarily believe without being able to give any other reason for our belief than by referring to the common sense of mankind. The external qualities of most natural objects excite the same ideas in the mind of every individual, whose senses are not vitiated by disease, or depraved by an original blemish in the organs themselves. If any person endeavour, by mere subtilty of reasoning, to persuade us that these qualities, or, which is still worse, that the objects themselves, are not only different from what they appear to be, but have no existence at all, Whether are we to renounce the authority of our senses, or to suspect the solidity of such a persons reasoning? For example, I affirm that I at present see the

Monthly Review, and particularly that part of it which contains the remarks of S. C. on Dr Reids Inquiry. Prove your proposition, says my friend. Why, here is the paper, the characters, &c. Turn your eyes this way, and be convinced. If this is unsatisfactory, I will not pretend to demonstrate the existence of the Monthly Review, or of S. C.'s letter, by any other means.

Our belief is entirely regulated by sensation and reflection. That belief which is founded on the evidence of the senses is more cogent and convincing than that which is the result of reflection. Our ideas are first acquired by the intervention of the senses; and their evidence acquires such force, both from the constitution of our nature and habitual exercise, that the utmost efforts of reason are often insufficient to weaken them, even when the senses are in some measure deceived. Now, it is impossible to read Dr Reids Inquiry without perceiving that he always opposes common sense, or the evidence of sensation, not to philosophy in general, but to that spurious species of reasoning which endeavours to unhinge the human constitution, and to annihilate the au-

thority of the senses where it is impossible that they can be deceived. The positions and revolutions of the planets, although they are not evident to the senses of a person who is unacquainted with the general laws of nature; yet, when these laws are even but superficially known, instead of contradicting, they are perfectly agreeable to the common sense of mankind. However, a man of ordinary understanding will freely confess that he is ignorant of the laws by which the heavenly bodies are governed; and that he has, therefore, properly speaking, no settled opinion or belief about the matter. But, if any person pretend to demonstrate that neither sun, moon, or stars exist; that they are nothing but impressions or ideas; or that, if they exist at all, it is not in the heavens, but in his own mind that he must look for their existence, common sense would instantly revolt at such unintelligible jargon.

Were I a man of an inflammatory temper, I would be tempted to say, that our authors next remark is something worse than ignorance of Dr Reids meaning in the following passages. "It is genius," says Dr Reid, "and not the want of it, which adul-

terates philosophy." Hear S. C.'s remark on this observation, which, even in the detached and unconnected manner in which he has quoted it, is extremely obvious and just. "Now, if the Doctor means only by this expression, that a genius for poetry, when employed about philosophy, adulterates it, then it is certainly an indisputable truth, but so self evident, that it does not appear worthy of the learned authors observation. But if he means, as the title and general tenor of his work imply, that a genius for reasoning, or the genius proper for philosophy, that the talent which alone qualifies a man for the understanding and improvement of philosophy, is the talent which occasions the adulteration of it, and without which there would be error or false theory; then, supposing the supposition to be true, which seems to involve in it a contradiction, might we not with just as much reason find fault with our legs as with genius; because, though we should not be able to walk without them, we should not then be liable to stumble?"

Here S. C. seems to have industriously avoided the real meaning of the Doctors observation, which must be apparent to the

most superficial reader, especially if he give himself the trouble of perusing the ten lines immediately following. But, even taking it as it stands in S. C.'s letter, it plainly implies, that a lively impetuous imagination is a temper extremely ill adapted for exploring truths, or for investigating the principles, operations, and affections of the human mind.—"It is genius," says the learned Doctor, "and not the want of it, that adulterates philosophy, and fills it with error and false theory. A creative imagination disdains the mean offices of digging for a foundation, of removing rubbish, and carrying materials; leaving these servile employments to mere drudges in science, it plans a design and raises a fabric. Invention supplies materials where they are wanting, and fancy adds a colouring and every befitting ornament. The work pleases the eye, and wants nothing but solidity and a good foundation," &c. Read these few lines Mr S. C. and seriously consider whether you have done justice to Dr Reids performance. Philosophy requires her votaries to be men of a slow train of perceptions. They must be able, as it were, to correct the impetuosity of their ideas, and patiently to revolve, examine, and

arrange them. How ill qualified for this employment is a man of genius, or a man of a lively and impetuous imagination? His train of ideas is rapid as lightning. He cannot submit to any thing that requires deep thinking, or strict examination; his ideas succeed each other with such velocity, that they leave him no time to ruminate.

I COME now to the third remark of our author. Speaking of Bishop BERKLEYS Principles of Human Knowledge, Dr REID says, "The opinion of the *ablest* judges seems to be, that BERKLEYS principles neither have been, nor can be confuted; and that he hath *proved* what no man *in his senses can believe.*" Very good. If Bishop BERKLEY, by rejecting the evidence of the senses, has proved that nothing exists in nature except spirits and ideas, is not Dr REID sufficiently warranted to make this observation? And will any man in his senses ever attempt to shew, that Bishop BERKLEYS principles are ill founded in any other way than by referring to that very evidence which he rejects as false? That Bishop BERKLEYS principles cannot be confuted but by the evidence of sensation, or consciousness, or common sense.

is all that Dr Reid intends by the above observation.

But our author goes on, and draws the following conclusion. "It follows," says he, "from this position, either that the *ablest* judges of this point are mistaken about it, which is *impossible to be true*, because they *would not be the ablest*," &c. This conclusion is either too deep or too shallow for my comprehension. For, according to my way of thinking, it is *very possible* that the *ablest* judges of any point or subject under heaven may be *mistaken about it*. Neither will it surprise any man acquainted with human nature that this should *frequently* be the case. But let us view the other alternative in this conclusion: "or that, as no man in his senses can believe arguments which cannot be confuted; therefore no man in his senses can trust his reason, or assent to demonstration." Dr Reid does not use the word *demonstration;* though, *arguments which cannot be confuted*, which is the Doctors real expression, seems much the same with *demonstration*. But, when the Doctor says, *arguments which cannot be confuted*, he plainly

means, that they cannot be confuted but by opposing to them the evidence of the senses.

S. C. goes on to finish his remarks with shewing, as he thinks, the truth of that proposition which Dr Reids whole work is intended to refute. The proposition is this, "That nothing is perceived but what is *in* the mind which perceives it." This proposition, according to S. C. is a self-evident truth, when its terms are explained. Let us attend, then, to his explanation of the terms, and the self-evident truth which is to be the result of this explanation. The words *perception* or *sensation* have two significations; by the one they imply the *faculty*, by the other, the *object* of that faculty, or the *thing perceived.* An object of sense, therefore, is a *thing* perceived; and a sensation or perception, taken in their latter signification, are synonimous terms; and, as the learned author himself grants, and every man else must, that a sensation cannot be without a mind, or sense and being, it follows, that no *perception, object of sense*, nor *any thing perceived, can be without a mind;* or, in other words, that *nothing is perceived but what is in the mind that perceives it.*—It is certainly true, that

the terms *perception* and *sensation* are employed by some authors to signify the *objects* of perception and sensation. But, however loosely these terms may have been used, no two things in nature can be more distinct and separate. *Perception* or *sensation* is that internal operation by which we are made conscious of the *existence* or *qualities* of objects. The existence or qualities of objects, on the other hand, are the *causes* of our perceptions or sensations. But, allowing the conclusion all the force which S. C. desires, he seems to destroy its foundation when he comes to explain his own meaning. Or, "in *other* words," says he, "nothing is perceived but what is *in* the mind which perceives it." It is readily granted that nothing can be perceived without the intervention of a mind or sentient being; but to say that therefore nothing is perceived but what is actually *in* the mind, is a mere quibble on the words *in* and *without*, which scarce merits a serious answer. I perceive a house, a garden, &c. I have no other means of perceiving these objects but by the assistance of a mind or sentient principle: The perception of them is occasioned by some mutual influence of the object upon the mind, and of the mind upon

the object, the nature of which we are entirely unacquainted with. But that the objects themselves are really *in* the mind, is so contradictory to sense and observation, that nothing but the genius of a BERKLEY or a HUME could have even rendered such an hypothesis respectable enough to have been at any time a subject of serious disputation.

IT is almost needless to take notice of the last remark of our author. Dr REID had formerly observed, that "a sensation cannot be without a mind or sentient being;" and yet, adds S. C. "he confesses, that if any man should demand a proof of this, he cannot give one."—Dr REID could give no other proof of this than what arises from the principles of common sense; that is the whole mystery.

Now, Gentlemen, I would wish to see the foregoing observations inserted in your Review; not that I may thereby afford you an opportunity of shewing your *impartial* regard for *truth*, for every article in your instructive work affords you an opportunity of this kind; but because S. C. seems to triumph over Dr REIDS performance as if he had sap-

ped the very foundation, and overturned the whole superstructure, by one masterly blow. —"I have shewed the incongruity, and I think I may say (without offence to *truth* or *candour*) the absurdity of the authors plan in this work." How awkwardly does such important language flow from a man who has only made a trifling criticism on the title, and has mistaken or misrepresented the obvious meaning of six or eight lines in the introduction and first chapter of a work which is fraught with ingenuity, experience, and solid argument! I am, Gentlemen, your constant reader, and frequent admirer,

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

ALTHOUGH not directly connected with the foregoing communication to the Monthly Review, another circumstance of a similar nature may be here mentioned, though very long posterior in point of time. But they are both undated circumstances. In 1783, the present Dr ALEXANDER MONRO, senior, who has for more than half a century filled the anatomical chair in the University of Edinburgh with uncommon ability and patient industry, published an anatomical and

physiological work of considerable merit, entitled, Observations on the Nervous System. Mr SMELLIE transmitted for the London Review an analysis of that work; but whether it was finally accepted and published we have now no means whatever to ascertain: All that is known on the subject is contained in the following letter from Mr GRIFFITHS, then the conductor of that work for the late Mr R. DODSLEY, the famous London bookseller, now sole proprietor of that highly celebrated literary journal, a work without a rival till the appearance of the Edinburgh Review.

No. LXV.

Mr R. GRIFFITHS *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

SIR, *No date.*

I SHOULD have sooner answered your favour of June 30th, but have been prevented by various accidents. I had sent *MONROS Observations* to the gentleman who was statedly the reviewer of such articles, and who lived at the distance of near 150 miles from

hence. On the receipt of your analysis, I forwarded your paper to the gentleman here alluded to; who, to my great loss, and that of the public, *is now no more!* You may, perhaps, have seen the character of this learned and excellent person in some of the newspapers, where he is stiled the Philosopher of Massingham: His name was Bewly; but all that has been said in his praise falls short of his extraordinary merit. Yesterday I received information that all the books and papers which my late worthy friend had, in connexion with the Monthly Review, will soon be returned by his widow. When they arrive at this place, I shall possibly know what has been the fate of your paper. It is possible he may have marked it for insertion, with or without alteration; or he might have prepared some account of his own. I have said *possibly*, because the acceptance of communications is by no means a usual thing with the Monthly Reviewers; never, indeed, but where they truly convey the reviewers sentiments. But, concerning this matter, I shall probably be enabled to give you farther intelligence in a short time hence. Meanwhile, I remain, &c.

R. Griffiths.

The first copartnery into which Mr Smellie had entered with the Messrs Aulds, as already mentioned, was dissolved in less than two years, in consequence of Mr Robert Auld withdrawing from the concern. But a new company was immediately formed, by the accession of Mr John Balfour, late bookseller in Edinburgh, who had formerly belonged to the firm of Hamilton, Balfour, and Neil, with whom Mr Smellie had served his apprenticeship. The new copartnership consisted of Mr John Balfour, Mr William Auld, and Mr William Smellie, and commenced business on the 22d December 1766. Mr Balfour appears to have brought along with him, into this new concern, the newspaper or Journal which had formerly been carried on by Messrs Hamilton, Balfour, and Neil; or at least this new company certainly did publish a newspaper. This circumstance is ascertained by the following letter from Mr Smellies partner Mr William Auld, who seems to have then been at some distance from Edinburgh.

No. LXVI.

Mr WILLIAM AULD *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR WILLIE, *30th April* 1768.

I HAVE just read your paragraph in the Journal concerning Bowed JOSEPH and his procession; which is indeed diverting enough, if it bring no reflections. But no doubt you are acquainted with the facts, and can best judge upon what grounds they are founded. If there was a *real* procession, what meanness not to take notice of it! If it is altogether imaginary, I hope you will be answerable for the paragraph.

IF BALTIMORES trial is finished, send me a copy by the post. I am, &c.

WILLIAM AULD.

THE person named *Bowed* or crooked JOSEPH, in this letter, was a low blackguard cobler; who, by dint of fearless effrontery, long led the Edinburgh mobs; and frequent-

ly excited or directed lawless excesses which would not now be tolerated, and were then a disgrace to the want of energy in the Magistrates. In those days, as hinted at in this letter, the Scots printers trembled to venture upon the slightest allusion that might be construed into the smallest offence by those who held themselves to be of the higher orders; yet mobs were then almost permitted to do as they pleased. In our more modern days of various improvement, those matters are fortunately reversed: The scandalous excesses of mobs are either not heard of, or are repressed by the firm and temperate determination and exertion of well regulated civil authority; and the Scots press is fast approximating to a full participation of the liberties enjoyed in the sister kingdom of England. The entire abolition of the undefined and undefinable *nobile officium*, and the full introduction of jury trials for all alleged misdemeanors or libels, would consolidate the political independence of Scotland upon a footing equal to that enjoyed in England: For the time is now happily gone bye, when the frown of the sub-deputy-agent of a party could controul the freedom of literary or

constitutional discussion, and blast the sale of the efforts of genius.—*Requiescat in pace!*

It is told of *Bowed* Joseph, that when leader of a numerous mob occasioned by the scarcity and dearness of oat-meal, after a bad harvest, their indignation was chiefly levelled against the dealers in that necessary article of subsistence, then called Meal-mongers, under the vulgar notion that they held back the meal from market, and artificially enhanced its price, by a fancied crime, still remaining on our statute book, called *forestalling*. The mob proceeded to assail the houses of these dealers, and to seize and distribute their stores of meal among themselves: But Joseph, their ruler, affixed what he presumed to be a just and moderate price, which he took care should be paid into his own hands for every particle of meal carried away, and which he honestly delivered to the proprietors, who would otherwise have lost all. In this part of his conduct, however justly reprehensible on the whole, though he acted as leader of the mob, he was in some measure the moderator likewise.

The copartnery of Balfour, Auld, and Smellie, seems to have been carried on for several years to the mutual satisfaction of the parties. At length, towards the end of the year 1769, disputes arose between Mr Smellie and Mr William Auld, one of the partners; but such is the imperfect state of the correspondence which remains on this subject, that it is exceedingly difficult to form any tolerably certain conjecture on the nature and cause of the discord. As already mentioned, Mr John Balfour, whose name was at the head of the firm, was an eminent bookseller; and being fully occupied with the care of his own peculiar business, entrusted the entire management of the printing concern to his partners, Messrs Auld and Smellie, who were each entitled to an allowance of twelve shillings a-week from the company, as a compensation for their trouble. Mr William Auld had fallen into a bad state of health, owing to which he was long under the necessity of residing in the country, and had even taken a voyage to London in hopes of benefiting his health. During a long protracted illness, and consequent absence from the printing office, although by that means the whole

charge and labour devolved upon Mr Smellie, Mr Auld appears to have regularly taken credit in the books of the company, which seem to have been under his management as senior acting partner, for his weekly allowance of twelve shillings. To this arrangement Mr Smellie appears to have objected, and not unreasonably, because the whole burden of management had fallen to his share.

At this period, likewise, a newspaper called the Journal, which was carried on by the company, appears to have been considered by Mr Smellie as a losing concern, and he strongly urged the necessity of its being dropt; while his partner Mr William Auld pertinaciously insisted that it should be continued. A farther bone of contention arose between these partners, from the circumstance of Mr William Auld having engaged an apprentice to the business, without consulting with Mr Smellie; who alleged that there were already more apprentices in the printing-house than could be profitably employed, and positively refused to admit this additional apprentice into the house.

These disputes appear to have occasioned a long correspondence; and, by some of the letters which still remain, Mr William Auld lost his temper in the course of the dispute, and even descended into personal invective against Mr Smellie. The commencement of this dispute seems to have been about the month of October 1769; and the final issue was a dissolution of the copartnery in November 1771. Mr Balfour, the leading partner, does not appear to have taken any concern in this protracted dispute; yet we have reason to conclude that he considered Mr Smellie as in the right, for immediately on the breaking up of the company of Balfour, Auld, and Smellie, a new partnership was entered into by Mr Balfour and Mr Smellie, which commenced business on the 12th November 1771, as will be farther noticed in the sequel.

Some time before the dissolution of the copartnery with Mr William Auld, and perhaps arising from the discord which had unfortunately taken place between him and Mr Smellie, it would appear that a plan was in agitation about the close of 1769, for introducing Mr Smellie into the management of

the vast printing concern carried on at London by the late eminent WILLIAM STRAHAN, Esq. M. P. joint Kings printer for England. The commencement of the following letter refers to the Memoirs of Great Britain, a work published in 1771, by Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE, which was then printing by Mr SMELLIE. The concluding paragraph hints very distinctly at the before-mentioned plan of employing Mr SMELLIE at London.

No. LXVII.

Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE *to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

DEAR SIR, *London, January* 30. 1771.

I SEND you the preface and the errata; and so we bid farewell to each other.

I HAVE a very material thing to tell you. In a note at the bottom of p. 115, part II. there are these words: *I gave it afterwards to Lord* HARDWICKE, *who has it now.* He has lost the paper, and insists these words should be out. You will therefore cause a

pen be put through every copy, and the ink must be firm and black, so as to make it quite illegible.

I TOLD all your qualities to STRAHAN, in much stronger terms than I can repeat to you, and have reason to believe you will soon take up your residence here. He asked me what your business was worth in Edinburgh. I said I did not know; but that one of your friends called it to me about L.200 a-year. Let me know what terms you would expect, and I will manage the affair for you. Yours, &c.

J. DALRYMPLE.

THOUGH never carried into effect, the same idea seems to have recurred in 1780 or 1781, as appears by the following letter, which is peculiarly valuable, as containing a sketch of Mr SMELLIES life written by himself. His son, the present Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE, says that it was written to the late WILLIAM STRAHAN, Esq. and that it proceeded from an offer made to him by Mr STRAHAN to go up to London, and to take the management of his great printing concern, either with

a share of the business, or on a high salary. The letter has no date; but from internal evidence must have been written about or after 1780, as he indirectly states himself to have been then forty years of age; and from the mention of his having been recently elected Superintendant of Natural History to the Scottish Antiquaries, it must have been in 1781.

In this letter he expresses a strong inclination to see London; but in this he was never gratified, owing to his close and arduous attention to business and literary pursuits and speculations. The low situation of printing and bookselling at Edinburgh, which he states to have been the case when he wrote this letter, about thirty years ago, is now very materially changed for the better. It has been ascertained, London alone excepted, that there are now more printing in this place than in the whole island besides; and that as elegantly and as correctly printed books now issue from the Edinburgh press as from any in the known world. Mr Smellie was himself a first rate printer; and almost the whole Scots literature of any moment in his day was printed and

corrected by him. This could be easily and fully substantiated, were it deemed proper to give an abstract of his ledgers, as has been done in the life of a London brother in profession, Mr Bowyer. No person of his day could read proofs more accurately, or make more correct work than Mr Smellie, especially when the subject and composition was interesting or pleasing: But, as he abhorred the mere mechanical drudgery of this part of the employment, it frequently happened that his mind wandered from the dull subject in hand into a different train of thinking, which afterwards occasioned him a great deal of additional trouble. The allusion which he makes to certain abominable editions of many of the best English classics, must be understood of some underling printers, who, having no regular employment, had taken to printing cheap editions of popular books, of which the property right was expired, upon coarse paper, and with small worn-out types; some of which reprints were so grossly inaccurate, and so shamefully ill printed, as to be a disgrace to Edinburgh and the profession. The subject of the proposed lectures on the Philosophy of Natural History, mentioned in this letter, will be discussed

more at large in a subsequent part of these Memoirs.

No. LXVIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* WILLIAM STRAHAN, Esq.

SIR,

I THANK you for your kind letter of the 10th current, which I ought to have answered sooner. I have long had a most ardent desire to see the capital, and this ardour has increased ever since I had the honour of your acquaintance; but I have never been able to command time, or to spare money sufficient to procure me a repast so luxurious.

WITH regard to printing and bookselling here, they are both in a wretched condition. When you left Scotland, I suppose there were not above half a dozen printing-houses in Edinburgh. Now there are near thirty. How the masters of them live, GOD alone knows: But, by printing abominable editions,

and selling often below cost, they have ruined the reputation and sale of many of the best English classics. For this irreparable injury the booksellers have themselves to blame. Instead of publishing good editions, or of employing men who could execute business with accuracy, they encouraged ignorant journeymen to set up, and bought from them the trash they produced; because, as was alledged, they could by this means purchase 100 copies of any book as cheap as they could print 1000. They did not foresee the effects. They now feel them; and deserve what they have met with.

Your affectionate inquiries concerning my private affairs I shall never forget; and they merit a candid exposition. I have a family of no less than nine children. My income I suppose to be about L.200 annually, arising from the profits of business. Were this money well paid, I might contrive to be tolerably easy; but I could never acquire riches. My partner * has for some years printed little or nothing; and it is not likely that he will again become an adventurous publisher. Every other bookseller of any

* The late Mr John Balfour, bookseller in Edinburgh.

note, except Mr Creech, is likewise a printer; so that, instead of increasing, it is probable that my business will diminish. This is not a flattering prospect; but I must submit. From the age of fourteen to forty, inclination and fortune have condemned me to a very laborious life. During that period, without the aid of relations, I went through a regular course of the University, including chemistry, botany, and all the medical classes. You will perceive, Sir, from this course of studies, when joined to the sole management of the printing-house, that I could not be idle. The leisure hours which many young men spend in amusement or dissipation, I obliged myself to dedicate to study. Habits are acquired by a frequent repetition of the same tenor of conduct. Besides the necessary attention to business, I find that I cannot be happy without some literary project to amuse me. It was this *penchant* which produced the translation of Buffon, from which I still entertain hopes of some little emolument. The undertaking was laborious, but not unpleasant.

I mention another project. In the year 1774, my honourable friend Lord Kames

suggested to me a plan for composing Lectures on the Philosophy of Natural History, which I highly relished. I immediately began the work; and proceeded for some years collecting materials, till it received a long interruption from BUFFON. After finishing my translation of that work, I resumed my former scheme; and shall complete the lectures in less than twelve months.

ABOUT three years ago Dr RAMSAY, Professor of Natural History, died. My friends applied to Lord SUFFOLK in my favour; but Dr WALKERS political interest was strongest, and I lost the chair.

AT the last meeting of the Antiquarian Society. I was appointed Keeper of their Museum, with a request to deliver my Lectures in their hall when they were ready. This office, though no salary is annexed to it, increased my prospect of success, from the patronage of a body so numerous and respectable. But jealousy always rises in proportion to the narrowness of a country. Dr WALKER accordingly, though he has never yet lectured himself, has taken the alarm, and is using all his influence to get my Lectures suppressed.

I have endeavoured to convince his friends that no interference can ever happen. This explanation, however, has not satisfied him; and how the matter is to terminate, time alone can discover.

I BEG pardon for consuming so much of your valuable time with a detail of my private affairs. Were I not certain that I am communicating an abstract both of my past and present situation to the breast of an honourable friend, prudence would have prevented me from being so explicit. I have the honour, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

MR WILLIAM STRAHAN, to whom the foregoing letter was written, was born at Edinburgh in 1715. His father held a small appointment in the head office of the Customs in Scotland, and gave his son the education which every boy of decent rank in Edinburgh could then, and still does receive, in consequence of the very moderate fees of all the elementary schools rendering the avenues to learning accessible even to the most moderate circumstances. After acquiring the ele-

mentary foundations of learning at the grammar school, he, like Mr SMELLIE, was bound apprentice to a printer in Edinburgh. Soon after the expiry of his apprenticeship, he went to London, as a wider field for improvement in his profession. Before which change he appears to have entered into matrimony, while yet very young, and only a journeyman printer. Though he married early, and without looking forwards to any such provision for the establishment of a family as prudence might have dictated; yet, by sobriety, diligence, and attentive economy, even while his emoluments were extremely confined, he contrived always to live rather within his income, and gradually bettered his circumstances. This is the true golden rule by which every man may thrive, and which he used often to adduce as an encouragement for early marriage. He used often to say, That on every augmentation of his family, Providence always sent a sufficient increase of income to enable him to provide for his increased household expences.

BY his abilities in his profession, joined to correct literary taste and judgment of the opinions of the public in relation to books, ac-

companied by perfect integrity, unabating diligence, and honourable economy, he got on in business with almost unexampled success, after his first difficulties were mastered. Having become one of the most flourishing men in the printing trade in London, he purchased in 1770, from Mr Eyre, a share in the patent of Kings Printer for England; which, besides the right to print bibles and prayer-books, in which the two English universities have an equal participation, gave an exclusive right to print all statutes of the Legislature, after the royal assent has constituted them the Kings laws. Besides the emoluments arising from this appointment, and from very extensive private business as a printer, he now entered largely into the speculation of literary property, which requires considerable knowledge and sagacity to conduct with advantage. Chiefly in conjunction with his friend, the late Alderman Thomas Cadell, the great London bookseller, he purchased the copy-rights of many of the most celebrated literary productions of his time; a considerable number of which, by Scots authors, were purchased through the judgment of, and in conjunction with, Mr William Creech, the apprentice, partner,

and successor of the late Mr ALEXANDER KINCAID, Kings printer and stationer for Scotland. In these purchases of literary property, the liberality of Mr STRAHAN was equally conspicuous with his prudence and judgment, and, in some instances, may rather have exceeded the bounds of discretion. Yet, although no such liberal rewards had ever been before given for literary exertion as were bestowed by him and his associates, affluence to no common degree was the reward of this liberality; although, in a few individual instances, the sales may have not remunerated them for the expences, as must necessarily be the case in every extensive trade, in which some adventures must be expected to fail, while others have a prosperous issue.

HAVING acquired considerable wealth, the honourable reward of patient industry and judicious adventure, Mr STRAHAN, at the age of sixty, came into Parliament for the first time, as one of the members for the borough of Malmsbury in Wiltshire, having that illustrious and enlightened statesman and orator, C. J. FOX, as his colleague. He began his political career too late in life to attempt

becoming a public speaker; but in this new situation, he applied himself to public business with that ardency which was natural to him in every thing he undertook: He attended the House with the most scrupulous punctuality, and became a very useful member, especially in those laborious committees in which all important matters are patiently investigated and arranged, previously to their being submitted to the determination of the House. Political subjects had long occupied his active mind; and he had corresponded on the most interesting topics with some of the first characters of the age. Among these political correspondents was the celerated Dr Benjamin Franklin, himself a printer, to whom, in 1769, he had addressed a series of queries respecting the American discontents, which evinced that he entertained very just conceptions on the important consequences of that dispute, and much patriotic anxiety to investigate the proper means by which the grievances of these invaluable colonies might be removed, and permanent harmony restored between the two countries. These queries were published in the London Chronicle for 28th July 1778.

In the succeeding Parliament, Mr Strahan was returned as one of the members for Wotton-Basset in the county of Wilts. In his parliamentary conduct, he was a steady supporter of the *North* administration; and, when that party had finally to quit the direction of public affairs, in spring 1784, he lost his seat in Parliament by the dissolution consequent upon that change. Finding the infirmities of age advancing, and that his health had suffered from the long sittings and late hours which had been occasioned by the political warfare of the last Parliament, he took no measures for resuming a seat in the House of Commons. Without any formed disease, his strength was visibly declining; and, though his spirits survived his strength, even the vigour and activity of his mind began sensibly to decay. By a gradual decline of his corporeal and mental faculties, he died in the 71st year of his age, on the 9th of July 1785. By will he left L.1000 to the London Company of Stationers, with directions that the interest should be yearly divided among decayed printers, in portions of *five* pounds each.

The foregoing digression could not have been brought into any other part of these memoirs more conveniently than the one it now occupies, as it does not interfere with any particular portion or incident in the life of Mr Smellie, and is in itself an isolated circumstance, which, as it had no connexion with any other part of his life, appears to have led to no future consequences whatever. It merely serves to shew the interest that was taken by very respectable persons in the welfare of Mr Smellie; and gives an opportunity to notice one of his most respectable friends, who was an honour to his country, and to his profession as a printer, and a munificent patron of literature and learned men.

It has been already mentioned that, on the dissolution of the copartnery between Balfour, Auld, & Smellie, a new company was immediately entered into by Mr John Balfour and Mr Smellie, which commenced business on the 12th November 1771. In the former copartnership of Balfour, Auld, & Smellie, the two latter, as the active partners, were each allowed twelve shillings weekly, in name of salary for their trouble in managing jointly the concerns of the company.

In this new copartnership, Mr SMELLIE was allowed *ninety* pounds a-year, as a compensation for taking the whole charge upon himself, very nearly three times as much as his allowance from the former company; for which he was bound to devote his whole time to the superintendence of the work in the printing-house, to correct all the proof sheets, to post the books, to draw out accounts, to collect and pay money, and, in general, to execute the whole duty belonging to the master of a printing-house.

SOMEWHAT more than two years after the establishment of this new copartnery, Mr SMELLIE made a successful application to the late HENRY HOME, Lord Kames, to aid his industry by becoming surety or bondsman for him to the Royal Bank of Scotland, that he might be accommodated with a credit or cash account to the extent of two or three hundred pounds. In a transaction of this nature, which is almost universal in Scotland, a person in business grants a bond with satisfactory cautioners or sureties to a bank for a certain specified sum; and acquires thereby a right to draw upon the bank for any part, or the whole of that sum, as needed. Interest

at the rate of five per cent. per annum is always charged against him by the bank for all advances. He fills into his cash account, as he is able, all cash received by him which he may not have immediate occasion for, and such good discountable bills as come into his hands. If at any time he may have overpaid the bank, he is allowed three per cent. per annum upon the balance in his favour. A balance of principal and interst is struck yearly; and the amount, whether for or against him, constitutes the first article in his debit or credit of the account of the ensuing year.

The following letter, which has no date in its remaining copy, must have been written considerably posterior to the 12th November 1771, on which day Mr Smellie commenced his new copartnership with Mr Balfour; how long afterwards we have no means of precisely ascertaining; but, from his mentioning the increase of his business during the past two years, it was probably written in the spring of 1774. The answer to this letter, or that announcing the accomplishment of its object, which immediately follows, is dated on the 28th May 1774. Without often attending minutely to chronological arrange-

ment, for reasons already urged in the commencement of this work, it has been thought best to class along with this any other correspondence which took place between Mr Smellie and Lord Kames, and which has come to our knowledge; but, as often mentioned, a great deal of this correspondence was long ago destroyed.

No. LXIX.

Mr William Smellie *to* Lord Kames.

My Lord,

As I believe your Lordship is inclined to befriend me, I presume to beg a favour which will be of the greatest importance to me, and cannot, I imagine, be in the least prejudicial to your Lordship.

My business, these two years past, has increased to such a degree that I find a bank credit for L.200 or L.300 necessary to make the proper advantage of it. As Mr Balfour, my partner, is likewise bound for any intromissions, the risk must amount to nothing.

Now, my Lord, if you will do me the honour to become one of my sureties, you will have the pleasure of doing an essential service to a man of business, which must always be peculiarly grateful to a mind so susceptible as that of your Lordship. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. LXX.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* LORD KAMES.

DEAR SIR, *Blair-Drummond*, 28. *May* 1774.

I have signed the bond this day, witness WILLIAM SCONCE writer in Stirling, and JOHN DICK my servant.

THE Sketch on Government, being introductory only to what follows, I know not what review can be made of it; though that it cannot be shortened is certain. There is another subject I wish much more to be brought under review, and which will furnish much matter; viz. The attempt to account for moral evil in this world, which concludes the

first sketch in the second book. A good deal of genius may be exerted upon this subject.

I saw your friend Hamilton at Perth, who seems well satisfied with his condition.

Your friend most sincerely,

Henry Home.

Mr Smellie enjoyed the honour and happiness of an intimate acquaintance with the great and good lawyer, philosopher, and judge, Henry Home Lord Kames, for more than twenty years. Their acquaintance began in consequence of an anonymous letter which Mr Smellie sent to his Lordship, containing some observations, and even strictures, on his admired publication, the Elements of Criticism, then printing by Murray and Cochrane, to whom he was corrector. These critical observations have not been preserved; but the accompanying letter and its appropriate answer are subjoined, together with some other letters which passed between them. It has been already mentioned that the acquaintance to which these critical observations gave occasion continued for a long time;—in fact, it continued to the end

of the life of Lord KAMES. The first edition of the Elements of Criticism was printed in 1762, in three volumes octavo; but we have no certain memorial of the date of Mr SMELLIES first acquaintance with Lord KAMES.

FROM the want of date in the copy of this Mr SMELLIES first letter to Lord KAMES, there is considerable difficulty in settling the period of commencement of this acquaintance. Mr SMELLIE, jun. is disposed to believe that this intercourse, honourable to both parties, began while his father was still apprentice and corrector to his masters HAMILTON, BALFOUR, and NEILL. But, from the answer to this anonymous communication being dated in December 1764, it could not have been above a few days prior to that date when Mr SMELLIE first wrote anonymously; and from Lord KAMES expressing a wish to end the *blind intercourse*, it may be presumed that Mr SMELLIE declared himself shortly afterwards. He was corrector to MURRAY and COCHRANE in 1764.

OF all the subsequent publications by Lord KAMES, Mr SMELLIE uniformly corrected the proof sheets, and constantly used full critical

freedom in animadverting or proposing alterations in the language, &c. When Lord KAMES thought any particular observation or alteration on the proofs of his works not of any great moment, he used to express himself in writing, on returning the proof, in the following easy and good natured way, "Either of them is good enough, but I have altered the sentence to please you." Of this we have ample proof in the hand-writing of Lord KAMES, exactly conformable to the circumstance alleged.

No. LXXI.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to Lord* KAMES.

MY LORD, *No date.*

I HAVE perused the Elements of Criticism with great satisfaction. The utility, as well as the ingenuity of the performance, induced me to read it with even peculiar attention. Many observations occurred; some of which I committed to paper, that I might be the better enabled to judge if they were well founded. Sensible that your Lordships can-

dour will allow them all the weight they deserve, I have presumed to submit them to your review. If they can be of any service, my sole end in transmitting them will be fully attained. Being informed that a third edition is just going to press, I determined to send a few of these observations, although they are not finished with that accuracy I could have wished. If, however, your Lordship incline to see any more of them, a line directed to ——— —— will be communicated to your Lordships most obedient humble servant,

******* *******.

In this letter Mr Smellie inclosed his observations on the Elements of Criticism, to which it alludes; and Lord Kames, it is to be presumed without delay, sent the following answer to his anonymous correspondent. It is certain that their acquaintance began shortly afterwards, perhaps immediately; but of this circumstance we have no certain record.

No. LXXII.

Lord KAMES *to* ******* *******.

To the Person who has made Observations on the ELEMENTS.

SIR, *Edinburgh, Dec.* 6. 1764.

THE manuscript you sent me, and which I now return, gave me pleasure; and I am not a little obliged to you for it. I could have wished for more time to consider it deliberately; but as I would avoid the least suspicion of neglect, I have chosen to return my answer as soon as you could possibly expect it.

IN general, I like your observations; they must flow from one who has read with attention and with judgment. At the same time, the nature of my performance will not allow me to make much use of them. In the Elements, I keep altogether to general views; and it would swell the work beyond bounds if I were to follow those general views throughout all their consequences. This

work I leave to the reader, who, I suppose, will be better pleased to have these consequences left to himself, than to be led by the hand, as it were, in every step. There are, besides, several observations that, according to the plan of the work, cannot come in properly in those parts of the book that are referred to; and which are taken in, in substance at least, under other heads.

It is both difficult and tedious to explain all in writing. I shall, however, proceed to a few particulars to clear my meaning.

You observe very rightly, that to make composition orderly and connected, it is not alone sufficient that the thoughts be connected, &c. But then, if you consider that I am here only treating in general of conceptions and ideas in a train, I fancy you will find that I have omitted nothing which was proper to be brought in, in that general view. At the same time, you'll remark, that it is no part of the aim of that chapter to handle all the requisites of a complete discourse or composition: These, or the most of them, may be picked out from different chapters. With respect to the sym-

pathetic emotion of virtue, I am of opinion, that the principle upon which it is founded may produce pleasant emotions from many agreeable objects; and probably had this occurred at the time, it would have been added. But the sympathetic emotion of virtue was sufficient for my purpose; and I think it better to be modest in my additions, to prevent an ugly suspicion of a design to force a man to buy the same book twice.

With respect to the affection a man bears to his children, I had occasion to give it in the place, cited as an example of the communication of passion. But you'll remark that it could not be my design there to give a dissertation upon the love of parents to children; and if that could make part of my work, I should thankfully adopt several of your observations. At the same time, I have not said, or at least did not intend to say, that the love of parents to children is entirely resolvable into this communication of passion. I am not certain, because that part of the book is at the press; but if there be any such unwary expression, there is yet time to correct it.

What you observe of grandeur fairly accounts for the difference of taste about it. I was born and bred in a flat country; and the first time I saw a small round hill, perhaps not above 40 feet perpendicular, it made a stronger impression upon my mind than the greatest mountain I have seen since that time. But such particular observations, though pretty, are too minute for a general plan; and, in order to preserve the unity of design, I often denied myself the satisfaction of introducing them.

With respect to what is observed upon vol. I. p. 92. the theory is pretty, but I doubt of its being solid.

I shall be glad to see more of your observations; though I cannot find any necessity for this sort of blind intercourse. You have no reason to be ashamed of your observations; and the Author of the Elements will be glad of the acquaintance of a gentleman who studies to so good purpose a work that he thought worthy to see the light. I am, Sir, your obliged humble Servant,

Henry Home.

It is conceived to be more useful to continue an account of all the circumstances that have come to our knowledge respecting the intercourse between Lord Kames and Mr Smellie in this place, than to break down the narrative into disjointed fragments, by a rigid adherence to chronological arrangement. The two remaining letters in this correspondence refer to a new publication by Lord Kames, Sketches of the History of Man, and announces a friendly review of that curious and entertaining work, by Mr Smellie. The second of these letters must have been written very shortly after the first, as it mentions the appearance of an anonymous review of a part of the Sketches in the number of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review for May 1774.

No. LXXIII.

Mr William Smellie *to Lord* Kames.

My Lord, *Edinburgh, April* 23. 1774.

I have perused the Sketches. No book ever afforded me so much entertainment and

instruction. The curious remarks and hints are innumerable, and conveyed in so light and so easy a manner, that women and children, if they please, may become philosophers, with little expence of thought; and the philosopher, at the same time, has so much food for thought and reflection, that a few pages would require a volume of commentary. This I take to be the *summum bonum* of good writing. I hope your Lordships example will give an effectual check to those mystical, I might say, those nonsensical writers on human nature, who involve themselves in clouds of obscurity, and expect their readers to understand what they themselves cannot explain. Of this stamp is the treatise of *Human Nature;* and some later publications are liable to the same exception.

Your Lordships views of natural history will, I hope, lead the attention of naturalists to the only thing valuable in that science. I have read this part with great delectation; and shall soon write a short commentary, which will be sent for your Lordships perusal. I have the honour to be, &c.

William Smellie.

From the first paragraph in the next ensuing letter, which has no date, it was probably written in the end of April 1774, as it very evidently alludes to the friendly conduct of Lord Kames, in becoming his surety to the bank credit bond, as expressed in the letter from Lord Kames of 28th May 1774, already inserted; but must have been earlier considerably than that letter, as it announces the appearance of a review of one part of Lord Kameses Sketches of the History of Man on the 1st of May.

No. LXXIV.

Mr William Smellie *to Lord* Kames.

My Lord, *No date.*

Yesterday I received your most obliging letter, which shall be faithfully preserved as a monument of disinterested benevolence.

With regard to the article on Natural History, it will be very difficult to say any thing to purpose in such short bounds. However, I shall endeavour to crowd in as much

matter as possible. I shall soon have the honour of transmitting the manuscript to your Lordship. If it have the good fortune to please you, I need be under no apprehension of publishing it; if otherwise, it shall never appear.

I PROPOSE some general remarks on instinct,—strictures on the bad taste of naturalists in confining themselves, almost entirely, to the technical and uninteresting part of the subject;—to extract the argument in favour of marriage;—to conclude, by adding a few peculiar instincts, with their uses, &c.

I MEAN not to pursue these topics in the way of a regular plan. The nature of review writing does not admit of strict method. The observations will, therefore, be made in a rambling manner. My only fear is, that they will be unworthy of appearing with the title of Sketches of Human Nature at their head. But your Lordship will at least approve the intention, whatever the execution may be. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

P. S.—A sensible man, and a particular friend of your Lordship, has given us a review of the Sketch upon the Arts, which will be published on the first day of May.

During his intimacy with Lord Kames, Mr Smellie went one summer evening to sup with his Lordship; and the company was soon afterwards joined by the late Dr John Warden M'Farlane, the worthy, respectable, and highly useful minister of the Canongate, one of the suburbs of Edinburgh, and by Mr David Hume, the celebrated philosopher and historian. The conversation went on for some time very agreeably; till Dr Warden happened to mention, that he had read a sermon just published by one Edwards, under the strange title of the *Usefulness of Sin.* Mr Hume repeated the words, Usefulness of Sin! "I suppose," said he, "Mr Edwards has adopted the System of Leibnitz, 'that all is for the best.' To this he added, with a peculiar keenness of eye, and forcible manner of expression which was usual with him: "But what the devil does the fellow make of hell and damnation?" Dr Warden immediately took his

hat and left the room; and, though followed by Lord KAMES, who anxiously pressed him to return, he positively refused to rejoin the company.

LORD KAMES, it is well known, paid great and successful application to the improvement of agriculture. A great number of years ago, a German quack, who called himself Baron VON HAAK, vaunted of having discovered a powerfully fertilizing manure, which he advertised for sale, pretending that a very small quantity sufficed to fertilize an acre of land in a very extraordinary manner. Happening to converse with one of his neighbours on this subject, a plain sagacious farmer; the farmer observed to Lord KAMES, that he had no faith in the Barons nostrum, as he conceived the proposed quantity was vastly too small to be of any use. "My good friend," said Lord KAMES, "such are the wonderful discoveries in science, that I should not be surprised if, at some future time, we might be able to carry the manure of an acre of land to the field in our coat pocket."—"Very possibly," replied the farmer; "but, in that case, I suspect you will

be able to bring back the crop in your waistcoat pocket."

Mr Smellie wrote a short account of the life of his excellent and illustrious friend Lord Kames, which was first published in the third edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, and was afterwards reprinted in 1800, by his son Mr Alexander Smellie, in a posthumous volume, containing a selection from his fathers unpublished manuscripts. The original composition of this life, which was written on the spur of the occasion, proceeded from the following circumstance. Soon after the death of Lord Kames, some ignorant pretender to literature drew up a miserable tissue of falsehood and malignity, as a biographical account of that distinguished person, which was meant to have been inserted in the third edition of the Encyclopedia, then going on at Edinburgh. Intelligence of this was fortunately conveyed to Mr Home Drummond, his Lordships only son; who came immediately to Edinburgh, and sent for Mr Smellie, who readily undertook to draw up an appropriate and characteristical memoir of his friend and benefactor, to be substituted for the miserable performance

which was meant to have been inserted; and which, by his influence with Mr ANDREW BELL, the principal proprietor of the Encyclopedia, Mr SMELLIE readily got inserted. The authority for this incident, in addition to the recollection of the circumstances by Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE, as related to him by his father, will be found distinctly specified in a subsequent letter from Mr SMELLIE to the late FRANCIS GARDEN, Lord Gardenston, of the Court of Session. If Mr SMELLIE had lived, it was his intention to have made this life of Lord KAMES considerably more complete, by the introduction of many curious and interesting anecdotes, and by critical illustrations of his numerous and excellent works. This desideratum in Scots literary biography has been of late most amply and excellently supplied, by the publication, in 1807, of Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Honourable HENRY HOME of Kames; by the Honourable ALEXANDER FRASER TYTLER, Lord Woodhouselee, in two quarto volumes; which contains an extensive and well written account of Scots literature during the lengthened life of that distinguished Senator and illustrious philosopher; and which precludes the neces-

sity, or even propriety, of attempting to insert any biographical sketch of that eminent character in this work.

One of the earliest important literary projects of Mr Smellie, was the compilement and entire conducting of the first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, in three volumes quarto, which began to appear in numbers at Edinburgh in 1771. The plan, and all the principal articles of that Dictionary of Arts and Sciences, were devised and written or compiled by Mr Smellie; and he prepared and superintended the whole of that work, for which he only got L.200 from its proprietors.

The following terms on which Mr Smellie was engaged in this undertaking by Mr Andrew Bell engraver, and Mr Colin Macfarquhar printer in Edinburgh, are in the hand-writing of the late Mr Andrew Bell, the principal proprietor of the work.

No. LXXV.

Mr Andrew Bell *to Mr* William Smellie.

Sir,

As we are engaged in publishing a Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences; and as you have informed us that there are fifteen capital sciences which you will undertake for, and write up the subdivisions and detached parts of these conform to your plan, and likewise to prepare the whole work for the press, &c. &c.; we hereby agree to allow you L.200 for your trouble, &c. I am, &c.

Andrew Bell.

Besides the ordinary labour of compilement and abridgement of the entire first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, he wrote several original essays for that work; but he held Dictionary making in great contempt; and used to say jocularly, that he had made a Dictionary of Arts and Sciences with a *pair of scissars*, clipping out from various

books a *quantum sufficit* of matter for the printer.

It is well observed by the immortal Shakespear, "There is a tide in the affairs of man, which, taken at the height, leads on to fortune." Had Mr Smellie firmly adhered to this grand literary project, the Encyclopedia Britannica, he had assuredly accumulated a handsome fortune, and might have left one third of that valuable work to his family. He was applied to by Mr Bell to take a share, and to superintend the construction of the second edition of that work, which began to be published in 1776. This he most unfortunately declined; because the other persons concerned, it has been said upon the suggestion of a very distinguished nobleman of the highest rank and most princely fortune, insisted upon the introduction of a system of general biography into the work; which Mr Smellie objected to, as by no means consistent with the title *Arts and Sciences*. At the death of Mr Macfarquhar, printer, in April 1793, the whole work became the property of Mr Bell. It is well known that Mr Macfarquhar left a handsome fortune to his family, all or

mostly derived from the profits of the Encyclopedia; and that Mr Bell died in great affluence, besides possessing the entire property of that vast work, which still belongs to his executors; every shilling of which may be fairly stated as having grown from the labours of Mr Smellie in the original fabrication of the work, which is confessedly superior; and all of which he and his family might have shared in equally with Mr Bell and the other proprietor, if he had not been too fastidious in his notions, and perhaps too timid in his views of the risk which might have been incurred in the mercantile part of the speculation.

Of the original edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, already mentioned as the entire work of Mr Smellie, we do not know its exact number of copies. The second edition, which consisted of 1500, began to be published in 1776, and extended to ten volumes in quarto. A third edition, in eighteen volumes, was commenced in 1786, and extended to 10,000 copies. By this edition, the two proprietors, Mr Bell and Mr Macfarquhar, are said to have cleared a net profit of L.42,000, besides being each paid for

their respective work in the conduct of the publication as tradesmen; Mr Bell as engraver of all the plates, and Mr Macfarquhar as sole printer. Even the warehouseman and the corrector of the press are reported to have made a considerable profit from the copies for which they procured subscriptions. The fourth edition of this work, just finished, extended to 20 quarto volumes, and 3,500 copies; and a fifth edition is now at press, to consist from the first of 2000 copies, besides the possibility of extended sales calling for reprints.

One of the original articles which Mr Smellie wrote for the first edition of the Encyclopedia, is that entitled ÆTHER. That article became the subject of a great misunderstanding between two celebrated medical professors in the University of Edinburgh, the late Dr John Gregory and Dr William Cullen. Of that singular dispute, the present Professor of the Practice of Medicine, Dr James Gregory, gives the following account, in his Additional Memorial to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, published in 1803, p. 187.

"A YEAR or two afterwards, an event took place, which made Dr CULLEN very angry, and gave my father, Dr JOHN GREGORY, some uneasiness.

"IN the *first* edition of the Edinburgh Encyclopedia Britannica, which, to the best of my recollection, was published here in numbers about 30 or 35 years ago, the article *Æther* made a conspicuous figure. In that article, the doctrine of the Nervous Æther, and the whole of Dr CULLENS doctrine of the Nervous System, was very roughly handled. This, without ever mentioning Dr CULLENS name, or alluding to him as the author or assertor of such doctrines, was done under pretence of discussing a certain thesis, entitled, *De Ortu Animalium Calore*, by GUSTAVUS RICHARD BROWN, of Maryland, published in 1768. In that thesis, the production of animal heat, and many other curious things, are referred to the supposed Nervous Æther and its vibrations. It was well known to every student at the University at the time, and indeed it is avowed by Dr BROWN in the whole of his thesis, from the motto on his title page to the concluding sentence of his dissertation, that it was the theory on these subjects

taught by Dr Cullen. It was one of his *tubs to amuse the whale;* and after it had served its purpose for some time, and was a little shattered in the service, he very wisely withdrew it, and threw out another and another, so as to keep the *whale* effectually amused, and always playing about him. But, as he had not forgotten my fathers hint on the subject, as soon as the severe discussion of the Nervous Æther appeared in the Encyclopedia, he immediately supposed it was written by my father. So fully was he possessed with this notion, that he mentioned it without much reserve to some of his pupils, some of whom reported it to my father. I have heard that he mentioned his belief on that point to several other persons: I know he did so to Mr Creech the bookseller. Nay, as I have lately learned from the present Mr Alexander Smellie, printer, Dr Cullen, in conversation with his father, the late Mr William Smellie, one of the authors, not the printer of that edition of the Encyclopedia, told him that he was *sure* that my father had written that article, and that he knew his style.

"This must have afforded much amusement to Mr Smellie, who was himself the author of that article; as my father soon learned from Mr Smellie; for he was so much piqued at Dr Cullens unjust and ungenerous suspicion, that he spared no pains to discover the real author of that well written but severe article, which had given such offence, and been so rashly imputed to him. Mr Smellie, for good reasons, did not choose to be generally known as the author of it at that time; but I know that, in the course of some years afterwards, Dr Cullen found him out, and was very angry at him accordingly. That discovery of Mr Smellie being the author of it, I have always understood, gave occasion to the complete alteration and softening of the article Æther in the second and all the subsequent editions of the Encyclopedia; so that nothing of it was allowed to remain that could give offence to Dr Cullen."

It has been alleged that the circumstance which weighed most with Dr Cullen in being angry on the subject, was, that certain godly ministers of Edinburgh had taken the a-

larm at Dr CULLENS doctrine, and impressed an idea on some good ladies that it was unorthodox. Dr CULLEN therefore was apprehensive that it might injure his medical practice among the leading ladies of Edinburgh. We are far from wishing to impute any sinister motives to the reverend clergy who bestirred themselves on this occasion, to repress what they considered as heterodox doctrines. We know that the order is generally most respectable, and contains an uncommon number of learned, ingenious, and liberal men. But some well-meaning members of that numerous and respectable body are apt occasionally to embrace confined views in science and philosophy with a too hasty zeal, as was the case on the occasion here alluded to. The article respecting Æther is ingenious; and the publication in which it appeared having been long superseded by more extensive editions, it has been deemed worthy of being reprinted in this place. It gives a striking instance of Mr SMELLIES acute discernment, and strict philosophical induction; which otherwise is now in a manner hidden from the world in that obsolete edition of the Encyclopedia.

'ÆTHER, the name of an imaginary fluid, supposed by several authors, both ancient and modern, to be the cause of gravity, heat, light, muscular motion, sensation, and, in a word, of every phenomenon in nature. ANAXAGORAS maintained that æther was of a similar nature with fire; PERRAULT represents it as 7200 times more rare than air; and HOOK makes it more dense than gold itself. Whoever has an inclination to know the various hypotheses concerning æther may consult SHEBBERE, PERRAULT, HOOKS posthumous works, *Act. Erud.* Lips. 1716, BERNOUILLIS *Cogitat. de gravitate ætheris*, &c. &c.

BEFORE the method of philosophising by induction was known, the hypotheses of philosophers were wild, fanciful, ridiculous. They had recouse to æther, occult qualities, and other imaginary causes, in order to explain the various phenomena of nature: But since the days of the great Lord VERULAM, who may be styled the parent of genuine philosophy, a contrary course has happily been followed. He convinced the world, that all knowledge must be derived from experiment and observation; and that every attempt to investigate causes by any other means must be unsuccessful. Since his time, the best

philosophers have followed the tract which he pointed out. Boyle, Locke, Newton, Hales, and a few others, in little more than one century, have improved and extended science far beyond what the accumulated force of all the philosophers since the creation had been able to effectuate: A striking proof both of the comprehensive genius of Bacon, and of the solidity of his plan of investigation.

It must indeed be acknowledged, that there is a propensity in the human mind, which, unless it be properly restrained, has a direct tendency both to corrupt science, and to retard our progress in it. Not contented with the examination of objects which readily fall within the sphere of our observation, we feel a strong desire to account for things which, from their very nature, must, and ever will, elude our researches. Even Sir Isaac Newton himself was not proof against this temptation. It was not enough that he had discovered the nature of light and colours, the application of gravity to the motions of the heavenly bodies, &c. he must go further, and attempt to assign the cause of gravity itself. But, how does he proceed in this matter? Not in the way of experiment,

which had led him to his former discoveries, but in the way of conjecture, which will never lead any man to truth. He had recourse to a subtile elastic æther, not much different from that of the ancients, and by it accounted for every thing he did not know, such as the cause of gravitation, muscular motion, sensation, &c.

Notwithstanding the reputation of Sir Isaac, philosophers have generally looked upon this attempt as the foible of a great man, or, at least, as the most useless part of his works; and accordingly peruse it rather as a dream or a romance, than as having any connexion with science. But we are sorry to find that some late attempts have been made to revive this doctrine of æther, particularly in a dissertation *De ortu animalium caloris*, published in May 1768.

As the revival of an old doctrine becomes in some measure a new one, we shall plead no other apology for inserting a specimen of the method of reasoning employed in this dissertation.

The author makes frequent use of a species of argument termed *dilemma* by logicians.

For example, in the first part of the work, after endeavouring to prove that animal heat cannot be owing to fermentation, the motion of the fluids, and other causes that have usually been assigned, he draws this conclusion: —"If none of these causes are sufficient to produce the effect; therefore, by dilemma," says he, "it must be sought for in the nature and action of the nerves." This is a new species of dilemma:—If the author had proved, that the cause of heat in animals could not possibly exist *any where*, but *either* in fermentation, the motion of the fluids, &c. *or* in the nerves, after having disproved its existence in all the rest, his conclusion in favour of the nerves would have been just; but, as he has not so much as attempted this, the conclusion is not only false, but ridiculous.

However, upon the authority of this dilemma, the author first gives what he calls a Compend of a *new* doctrine concerning the nerves, and then proceeds to inquire in what manner the nerves produce animal heat: He tells us, "That *thought* (*cogitatio*) and sensation depend upon impulses either on the extremities of the nerves, or the *sensorium commune*, and the consequent motions produced by these impulses: That these motions are

so quick, as to be almost instantaneous: That as all motion is mechanical, therefore *thought*, sensation, and muscular motion, must likewise be mechanical: That such quick motions cannot be produced without the intervention of some extremely elastic power; and as Sir Isaac Newton has shown that the impulses which occasion the different sensations must be owing to an elastic power; therefore the muscular motions of animals must be occasioned by the oscillations of some elastic power." "But," says he, "as this elastic power cannot exist in the solid nervous fibres, nor in any inelastic fluid; therefore, by *dilemma*, it must exist in an elastic fluid; and hence also, by the former *dilemma*, this elastic fluid must be seated, either in the nerves, or in their medullary substance."

Here again the author calls Sir Isaac into his assistance.—"What confirms this opinion," says he, "is the Newtonian æther, which pervades all nature, and which, with a few variations in its modification, Sir Isaac has shown to be the cause of cohesion, elasticity, gravity, electricity, magnetism, &c. in the following manner: 1. As the rays of light, when reflected, do not touch the solid parts of bodies, but are reflected a little be-

fore they reach them, it is plain that the æther not only fills the pores of bodies, but likewise floats upon their surfaces; and hence it becomes the cause of attraction and repulsion.—2. All metals, and inelastic fluids, are non-electrics; on the other hand, all solid bodies, metals excepted, are electrics, *i. e.* proper for accumulating æther. But æther, thus accumulated in such a variety of bodies, may produce various motions in the parts of these bodies, without inducing any change in the bodies themselves. Hence æther, with some variations in its modification, is sufficient to account for all the phenomena of electricity.—3. As iron, by accumulating æther around it, exhibits all the wonders of magnetism; so this magnetical æther is more analogous to the nervous æther of animals than any other kind of it: For, as the magnetical æther passes along iron without changing any part of the iron; so the nervous æther, in like manner, passes along the medullary substance of the nerves, and excites motion in any part that is continuous with them, without inducing any change in the nerves.—4. The irritability and life of plants, which very much resemble those in animals, cannot be explained by any inelastic cause,

and must therefore be attributed to an ætherial one.—Lastly, As the common æther is differently modified in each of the substances above taken notice of, and also produces various motions or effects peculiar to each, it likewise varies, and has some peculiar qualities when residing in animal bodies; so that the nervous or animal æther is not exactly the same, but differs in some respects from those species of æther which give rise to cohesion, gravity, magnetism, electricity," &c.

Having thus explained the nature and qualities of æther, our author starts a very important question; viz. "Whence is æther derived? and whether does it leave any body after having once got possession of it?" In answer to this, he observes, "That certain bodies have the power of collecting the electrical matter from every circumjacent body, and of accumulating it in their pores and on their surfaces, but do not suffer it again to transmigrate into any other body. There are other substances of an opposite nature, which do not accumulate the electric matter, but instantly allow it to pass into others, unless prohibited by an electric. Hence," says he, "nothing more is necessary for substances of

the former kind but to be in such circumstances as allow them to accumulate the electric matter. In the same manner," proceeds our author, " the nervous æther, which is diffused through svery part of nature, flows copiously into the medullary part of the nerves, when no obstacle stands in its way; but, when once it has got there, it keeps firm possession, and never afterwards leaves it. Now," says he, " a quantity of æther probably consitutes one of the staminal parts of animal bodies, and increases in proportion to their age and growth: For nothing is more *ridiculous* than to suppose that what is commonly called *the nervous fluid* can be daily wasted by labour and exercise, and daily repaired by a new secretion from the brain. To refute this *vulgar* notion, nothing more is necessary than to say, That it is *one of* BOERHAAVES *theories*, and *must be false*, as all BOERHAAVES other theories have been proved to be ill-founded! But æther is of a more fixed and determinate nature; whenever *it* gets possession of any substance, it never forsakes it, unless the texture and constitution of the body itself be changed. Hence," continues our author, " the æther of an acid body remains as long as the body continues to be

acid; the same observation holds with regard to the æther of an alkaline body: But, if these two be blended together into a neutral salt, the æther must likewise be changed into a *neutral;* and therefore, in the formation of the medullary or staminal part of animals, the æther which before belonged to, or had the properties of some other substance, is instantaneously changed into animal æther, and remains so till the dissolution of that animal."

Our author next observes, "That bodies require to be in a certain state or condition in order to the formation of an æther that is proper for them. This condition of bodies is called an *excited state:* Thus, as sulphur, when fluid, does not receive the electric matter, but, when solid, instantly receives it; in the same manner, the nerves, though properly formed, do not admit an æther adapted to their nature, unless they be in an excited state. Hence," says he, "the æther of a *dead*, and that of a *living* person, are very different, although the texture and figure of the nerves be the same. The state necessary for constituting the æther of a living animal, seems to depend on heat and

moisture; because these things are absolutely necessary in the constitution of life; and hence," continues our author, "the excited state of the nerves depend on heat and moisture. There are also certain circumstances," says he, "which contribute to render the state of the nerves more or less apt for accumulating æther: A spasmodic fever, for example, renders the nerves of the whole body less pervious to the motion of the æther; and hence, in cases of this nature, *health*, and all the *vital functions*, must be injured."

"THESE," our author observes, "are the outlines of a *new* doctrine concerning the nature and functions of the nerves;" and, upon this *foundation*, proceeds to give his *new theory* of animal heat.

"FROM the foregoing *reasoning*," says he, "the heat, as well as all the functions of animals, seem to be occasioned by the oscillations of the nervous æther betwixt the extremities of the sentient nerves and the brain, or, more properly, betwixt the brain and muscles. But electrical æther, as above observed, varies a little from common æther; all inelastic fluids, as was likewise formerly remarked, are non-electrics; and all solid

bodies, metals excepted, are electrics: These circumstances," says our author, seem to be owing to the oscillations of the electric matter in bodies. In the same manner," says he, " the nature of animals may be such, and the nerves may be so constituted, as to form an æther adapted to their nature, and to excite those oscillations which occasion animal heat. The wonderful effects of heat and cold upon the nerves," continues our author, " confirms this theory: Every action, and even life itself, requires a certain degree of heat; for, as the heat of the external air is so variable, it was absolutely necessary that animal bodies should be endowed with the faculty of producing a degree of heat suited to their nature, independent of external circumstances: Hence we see the reason why the degree of heat so seldom varies in the same species of animals. However, although the nervous æther is always ready for exciting heat by its oscillations; yet, in order to bring about this effect successfully, external *stimuli* are necessary, otherwise the æther would be in danger of *stagnating*, which would occasion sleep, a palsy, and, last of all, death. The most permanent of these *stimuli* is the pulsation of the arteries; which is the reason why heat is so connected with the circulation of the blood,

and why many authors have mistaken it for the true cause of animal heat.

Our author now concludes with observing, "That by his theory, the varieties of heat in different parts of the body, the heat and flushing of the face from shame, and all the other phenomena of heat in animal bodies, admit of a better explanation, than by any other theory hitherto invented."

Having thus given a pretty full account of an attempt to explain the most abstruse operations of nature, as nearly as possible in the very words of the author, we cannot deny ourselves the liberty of making a few observations.

To give a formal refutation of this authors reasoning, is no part of our plan. It is perhaps wrong to say that he has *reasoned;* for the whole hypothetical part of his essay is a mere farrago of vague assertions, non-entities, illogical conclusions, and extravagant fancies. His æther seems to be an exceedingly tractable sort of substance: Whenever the qualities of one body differ from those of another, a *different modification of æther* at once solves the phenomenon. The æther of iron

must not, to be sure, be exactly the same with the nervous æther, otherwise it would be in danger of producing sensation in place of magnetism. It would likewise have been very improper to give the vegetable æther exactly the same qualities with those of animal æther; for, in such a case, men would run great risk of striking root in the soil; and trees and hedges might eradicate and run about the fields. Nothing can be more ludicrous than to see a writer treating a mere *ens rationis* as familiarly as if it were an object of our senses: The notion of compounding the æther of an *acid* and that of an *alkali*, in order to make a *neutral* of it, is completely ridiculous. But if men take the liberty of substituting *names* in place of *facts* and *experiments*, it is an easy matter to account for any thing.

By this method of philosophising, obscurity is for ever banished from the works of nature. It is impossible to gravel an ætherial philosopher. Ask him what questions you please, his answer is ready:—As we cannot find the cause *any where* else; *ergo*, by dilemma, it must be owing to æther! For example, ask one of these sages, What is the cause of gravity? he will answer, 'Tis *æther!*

Ask him the cause of *thought*, he will gravely reply, The solution of this question was once universally allowed to exceed the limits of human genius: But now, by the grand *discoveries* we have lately made, it is as plain as that three and two make five:—*Thought* is a mere *mechanical* thing, an evident effect of certain motions in the brain produced by the *oscillations* of a subtile elastic fluid called *æther!* This is indeed astonishing!

Such jargon, however, affords an excellent lesson to the true philosopher. It shows to what folly and extravagance mankind are led, whenever they deviate from experiment and observation in their inquiries into nature. No sooner do we leave these only faithful guides to science, than we instantly land in a labyrinth of nonsense and obscurity, the natural punishment of folly and presumption.

When endeavouring to account for that propensity in the human mind which prompts us to attempt the solution of things evidently beyond our reach, we recollected a passage in Swifts works, which explains it in the most satisfactory manner.

"Let us next examine (says the Dean) the great introducers of new schemes in philosophy, and search till we can find from what faculty of the soul the disposition arises in mortal man, of taking it into his head to advance new systems, with such an eager zeal, in things agreed on all hands *impossible to be known;* from what seeds this disposition springs, and to what quality of human nature these grand innovators have been indebted for their number of disciples; because it is plain, that several of the chief among them, both *ancient* and *modern*, were usually mistaken by their adversaries, and indeed by all except their own followers, to have been persons crazed, or out of their wits; having generally proceeded, in the common course of their words and actions, by a method very different from the vulgar dictates of *unrefined* reason; agreeing, for the most part, in their several models, with their present undoubted successors in the *Academy* of *modern Bedlam.* Of this kind were *Epicurus*, *Diogenes*, *Apollonius*, *Lucretius*, *Paracelsus*, *Des Cartes*, and others; who, if they were now in the world, tied fast, and separated from their followers, would, in this *undistinguishing* age, incur manifest

danger of *phlebotomy*, and *whips*, and *chains*, and *dark chambers*, and *straw*. For what man, in the natural state or course of thinking, did ever conceive it in his power to reduce the notions of all mankind exactly to the same length, and breadth, and height of his own? Yet this is the first *humble* and *civil* design of all innovators in the empire of reason.—Now, I would gladly be informed, how it is possible to account for such imaginations as these in particular men, without recourse to my *phenomenon* of vapours, (*i. e.* æther) ascending from the lower faculties to overshadow the brain, and there distilling into conceptions, for which the narrowness of our mother-tongue has not yet assigned any other name besides that of *madness* or *phrenzy*. Let us therefore now conjecture how it comes to pass that none of these great projectors do ever fail providing themselves and their notions with a number of *implicit disciples;* and I think the reason is easy to be assigned.—For there is a peculiar string in the harmony of human understanding, which, in several individuals, is exactly of the same tuning. This, if you can dextrously *screw* up to its right key, and then *strike gently* upon it, whenever you have the good fortune to light

among those of the *same pitch*, they will, by a secret necessary sympathy, strike exactly at the same time. And in this one circumstance lies all the *skill* or *luck* of the matter: For if you chance to jar the string, among those who are either above or below your own height, instead of subscribing to your doctrine, they will *tie you fast*, call you *mad*, and *feed* you with *bread* and *water*. It is therefore a point of the nicest conduct to distinguish and adapt this noble talent with respect to the difference of *persons* and of *times*.—For, to speak a bold truth, it is a fatal miscarriage so ill to order affairs as to pass for a *fool* in one company, when in another you might be treated as a *philosopher:* which I desire *some certain gentlemen of my acquaintance* to lay up in their hearts as a very *seasonable innuendo*."

"We would not have dwelt so long upon this article, had it not been to guard, as far as our influence extends, the minds of those who may be unacquainted with the genuine principles of philosophy, from being led into a wrong tract of investigation."

In the first edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, under the word *Abridgement*, and as an example of what Mr Smellie then thought to be the best and most useful mode of abridging books, he gave the following short views of Mr Humes *Essay on Miracles*, and of Dr Campbells *Answer* to it. For similar reasons with those already assigned for reprinting the article on Æther, that upon Abridgement has been deemed proper to be inserted in these Memoirs.

"Abridgement, in literature, a term signifying the reduction of a book into a smaller compass. The art of conveying much sentiment in few words, is the happiest talent an author can be possessed of. This talent is peculiarly necessary in the present state of literature; for many writers have acquired the dexterity of spreading a few tritical thoughts over several hundred pages. When an author hits upon a thought that pleases him, he is apt to dwell upon it, to view it in different lights, to force it in improperly, or upon the slightest relations. Though this may be pleasant to the writer, it tires and vexes the reader. There is another great source of diffusion in composition: It is a capital object

with an author, whatever be the subject, to give vent to all his best thoughts: when he finds a proper place for them, he is peculiarly happy. But rather than sacrifice a thought he is fond of, he forces it in by way of digression, or superfluous illustration. If none of these expedients answer his purpose, he has recourse to the margin,—a very convenient apartment for all manner of pedantry and impertinence. There is not an author, however correct, but is more or less faulty in this respect. An abridger, however, is not subject to these temptations. The thoughts are not his own: he views them in a cooler and less affectionate manner; he discovers an impropriety in some, a vanity in others, and a want of utility in many. His business, therefore, is to retrench superfluities, digressions, quotations, pedantry, &c. and to lay before the public only what is really useful. This is by no means an easy employment: To abridge some books requires talents equal, if not superior, to those of the author. The facts, spirit, manner, and reasoning, must be preserved; nothing essential, either in argument or illustration, ought to be omitted. The difficulty of the task is the principal reason why we have so few good abridgements. Wynnes a-

bridgement of Lockes Essay on the Human Understanding is perhaps the only unexceptionable one in our language. These observations relate solely to such abridgements as are designed for the public. But,

When a person wants to set down the substance of any book, a shorter and less laborious method may be followed. It would be foreign to our plan to give examples of abridgements for the public: But, as it may be useful, especially to young people, to know how to abridge books for their own use, after giving a few directions, we shall exhibit an example or two, to show with what ease it may be done.

Read the book carefully; endeavour to learn the principal view of the author; attend to the arguments employed: When you have done so, you will generally find, that what the author uses as new or additional arguments are, in reality, only collateral ones, or extensions of the principal argument. Take a piece of paper, or a common-place book, put down what the author wants to prove, subjoin the argument or arguments, and you have the substance of the book in a

few lines. For example, in his Essay on Miracles, Mr Humes design is to prove, 'That miracles, which have not been the immediate objects of our senses, cannot reasonably be beliveved upon the testimony of others.' Now, his argument, for there happens to be but one, is,—

'That experience, which in some things is variable, in others uniform, is our *only* guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact. A variable experience gives rise to probability only; an uniform experience amounts to a proof. Our belief of any fact from the testimony of eye-witnesses is derived from no other principle than our experience in the veracity of human testimony. If the fact attested be miraculous, here arises a contest of two opposite experiences, or proof against proof. Now, a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as complete as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined; and, if so, it is an undeniable consequence, that it cannot be surmounted by any proof whatever derived from human testimony.

In Dr Campbells Dissertation on Miracles, the authors principal aim is to show the fallacy of Mr Humes argument; which he has done most successfully by another single argument, as follows:

'The evidence arising from human testimony is *not solely* derived from experience: on the contrary, testimony hath a natural influence on belief, antecedent to experience. The early and unlimited assent given to testimony by children gradually contracts as they advance in life: It is, therefore, more consonant to truth to say, that our *diffidence* in testimony is the result of experience, than that our *faith* in it has this foundation. Besides, the uniformity of experience in favour of any fact is not a proof against its being reversed in a particular instance. The evidence arising from the single testimony of a man of known veracity will go far to establish a belief in its being actually reversed: If his testimony be confirmed by a few others of the same character, we cannot withhold our consent to the truth of it. Now, though the operations of nature are governed by uniform laws, and though we have not the testimony of our senses in favour of any *violation* of them,

still, if, in particular instances, we have the testimony of *thousands* of our fellow-creatures, and those too men of strict integrity, swayed by no motives of ambition or interest, and governed by the principles of common sense, That they were actually eye-witnesses of these violations,—the constitution of our nature obliges us to believe them.'

These two examples contain the substance of about 400 pages. Making private abridgements of this kind has many advantages: It engages us to read with accuracy and attention; it fixes the subject in our minds; and, if we should happen to forget, instead of reading the books again, by glancing a few lines, we are not only in possession of the chief arguments, but recall, in a good measure, the author's manner and method."

In the year 1773, in conjunction with the celebrated Gilbert Stuart, L L. D. Mr Smellie engaged in a new monthly periodical work, entitled

The Edinburgh Magazine and Review.

The first number was published about the middle of October 1773; and the work was

conducted for some years with great spirit, much display of talent, and conspicuous merit. It would assuredly have succeeded, to the satisfactory emolument of its proprietors, and the lasting fame of its conductors, if its management had been entirely committed to the calm, judicious, and conciliatory control of Mr SMELLIE. But, owing to the harsh irritability of temper, and the severe and almost indiscriminate satire in which Dr GILBERT STUART indulged, several of the Reviews which appeared in that Magazine gave great offence to many leading characters of the day, which occasioned the sales to become so much diminished as to render it a losing concern to the adventurers, insomuch that it was discontinued on the publication of the number for August 1776, after the production of 47 numbers, forming *five* octavo volumes.

FEW periodical publications of a miscellaneous nature have ever been conducted with more talent, genius, and spirit; perhaps none with less judicious consideration of the circumstances and opinions of the time and place in which it appeared. In both of these attributes of excellence and defect, it was emi-

nently beholden to Dr Stuart. Possessed of excellent talents and much literary taste, which had been cultivated by a most liberal and extensive education, his genius and spirit, conscious of superior powers and attainments, were bold and regardless almost of every consideration of prudence or discretion. If he had regulated his exertions in the conduct of this Magazine and Review by a similar calm suavity of mind and manners with that which ever adhered to his literary coadjutor Mr Smellie, in every difficulty, and through many trying situations, the success of this adventure must have been secure, and, in the present day, could not have failed of being brilliant. But Dr Stuart was a disappointed man: thwarted in his early prospects of establishment in life, through the natural and necessary consequences of his own rash and imprudent conduct, he became indignantly hostile against others for the indispensible effects of his own improprieties. In the gratification of his misplaced resentments, he carelessly ruined the cherished offspring of his own conceptions; which, under judicious management, must have grown to giant strength, and splendid fame and fortune.

WITHOUT attempting to institute a comparison between the Edinburgh Magazine and Review and the present unexampledly successful periodical publications of Edinburgh; it may be proper to adduce the introductory address of that former Magazine, as a model of elegant and excellently appropriate composition; and the assertion may be safely hazarded, That, if it had been conducted on the principles there developed, and which Dr STUART and Mr SMELLIE were perfectly qualified to have acted up to, that work would have had few rivals, and fewer superiors.

To the Public.

"THERE has not hitherto appeared in Scotland a periodical publication which has been conducted with liberal views and on an extensive plan. Schemes, partial and imperfect, have been formed, and have been carried into execution, without even the merit of which they were capable. These could not be continued with success among a people remarkable for the purity of their taste and the solidity of their understanding. Many works, accordingly, of this nature have been drop-

ped; and of those of them which still are published, it cannot be said, by their warmest partizans, that they awaken curiosity, or are worthy of applause.

But, from the imperfections of former attempts, some instructive lessons may be learned. They evince the difficulty of such publications; they point out the dangers to be avoided; and they ought to excite to greater vigour of execution. These circumstances have not escaped the undertakers of the present work. They have remarked the obstacles they have to encounter, and have endeavoured to put themselves in a situation to surmount them. Nor is it chiefly from their own resources and their own preparation that they hope for the public favour and encouragement: They have secured the correspondence of many respectable and ingenious men in different quarters of the kingdom; and several authors of high and approved merit have given the promise of occasional aid.

The great object of the plan they have adopted is *Variety*. To be generally useful and entertaining, they mean to suit themselves to readers of every denomination. It

is not solely their intention to paint the manners and the fashions of the times, to interest the passions, and to wander in the regions of fancy. They propose to blend instruction with amusement; to pass from light and gay effusions to severe disquisition; to mingle erudition with wit; and to contrast the wisdom and the folly of men. They wish equally to allure and to please the studious and the grave; the dissipated and the idle. To the former they may suggest matter for reflection and remark; into the latter they may infuse the love of knowledge; and to both, they may afford a not inelegant relaxation and amusement.

Under one division of their work, they will present historical anecdotes and details, state papers, singular characters and inscriptions, extraordinary adventures, and facts and relations descriptive of mankind in the different stages of civilization and refinement; they will record useful projects and inventions, improvements in agriculture and manufactures, the proceedings of the British Parliament, interesting decisions of the courts of justice, and remarkable cases in surgery and medicine; and they will com-

municate researches into antiquity, strictures on the theatre, essays on curious topics of literature, memoirs of distinguished personages, select and original pieces of poetry, and discoveries and views in all the different branches of philosophy and science.

The other division of their undertaking will include an account of the more capital literary performances which appear in England, and of every new production which is published in Scotland. In the reports which they are to offer concerning the merit of the different authors who shall fall under their observation, they will conduct themselves with candour and impartiality. While they ascertain the advances of knowledge, they will endeavour to encourage the pursuit of it; and it will be much more agreeable to them to commend than to blame. They will pronounce their opinions with freedom, but will not stoop to indulge in ill nature or in satire. Their commendation will be tinctured with no malicious reserve, and their censure will not rise into petulance or acrimony. To procure the public approbation, they will be studious to deserve it.

Actuated by honourable motives, they have become candidates for the public favour; but, if it shall be found that they are unequal to the task they have imposed on themselves, they will not obstinately persist to solicit attention. They will listen with deference to the general opinion that is formed of their undertaking, and of their ability to execute it; and they will know from its tenor, whether they are to continue to deserve respect and encouragement; or, whether they are to relinquish an attempt, to which their ambition had taught them too fondly to aspire."

By the contract of copartnery, the partners in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review were, the late Alexander Kincaid, Esq. his Majestys printer and stationer for Scotland, a most worthy and respectable bookseller, who died in the office of Lord Provost or Chief Magistrate of Edinburgh, in January 1778; Mr William Creech, his partner in the bookselling business; Gilbert Stuart, Doctor of Laws; the late William Kerr, Esq. surveyor of the General Post Office for Scotland; and Mr William Smellie: And the following is an abstract of the

conditions of their agreement, taken from the original corrected scroll copy.

1. The whole to be formed and conducted by Dr Stuart, who engaged to furnish the press with copy.

2. The paper to be supplied by Messrs Kincaid and Creech, who were to be allowed the price out of the proceeds of sale.

3. The printing to be performed by Mr Smellie, who was to be paid at the ordinary rates out of the sales;—who was regularly to compile the last half sheet of every number, to consist of foreign and domestic occurrences, or the news department, and other articles;—to keep the accounts of the concern;—to answer all letters relative to the concern;—and to review certain articles, as should be agreed upon between him and Dr Stuart.

4. Mr Kerr engaged to give every assistance consistent with the duties and privileges of his official situation, in advancing the interests of the concern; for which purpose only he seems to have been invited to become a partner, as his share was to cease on the event of his death or demission from office.

5. The profits, divided into six shares, were to be thus distributed among the partners: One to Messrs KINCAID and CREECH conjunctly; one each to Mr KERR, Dr STUART, and Mr SMELLIE; and two, under the idea of copy-money, to Dr STUART and Mr SMELLIE, as authors and conductors, to be divided between them as they might agree.

IN the conduct of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, the whole of the article History, or News, as already mentioned, was confided to the sole management of Mr SMELLIE; besides which he wrote several essays for the Magazine part, but which these were cannot now be ascertained. He gave a copy of this work to his son, on which he had marked with his initials all those Reviews of his writing which he thought proper to acknowledge. These were:

1. *Kameses* Sketches of the History of Man, Art. III.

2. A small part of Lord *Monboddo* on the Origin and Progress of Language.

3. Revelation, the most effectual means of civilizing and reforming mankind ; a sermon, by *Robert Henry*, D. D. 1773.

4. *Worthingtons* Scripture Theory of the Earth, 1774.

5. The Druids Monument, a tribute to the memory of Dr *Goldsmith*, by the Author of the Cave of Morar, 1774.

6. Considerations on the Broad-cloth Manufacture, 1774.

7. *Buffons* Natural History, in French, 1774.

8. *Goldsmiths* History of the Earth and Animated Nature, 1775.

9. *Pringles* Discourse on the Torpedo, 1775.

10. *Hamiltons* Observations on Mount Vesuvius, 1775.

11. Essays on Agriculture, by a Farmer, 1775.

12. Dr *Hardys* Sermon before the Commissioner, 1775.

13. *Jenkinsons* Botany, 1775.

14. *Harrises* Philosophical Arrangements, 1775.

15. *Clark* on the Shoeing of Horses, 1775.

16. *Boutcher* on Forest Trees, 1775.

17. *Cockburns* Collection, 1775.

18. *Martyns* Elements of Natural History, 1775.

19. *Roses* Elements of Botany, 1775.

20. *Innes* on the Muscles, 1775.

21. *Hamiltons* Practice of Midwifery, 1775; and several others which he did not chuse to be known.

The limits of the present work preclude any extended account of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, except so far as Mr Smellie was concerned in its composition and success; yet it may not be unacceptable to the Public to see a list of the Reviewers, with the principal works which they respectively reviewed, and of such authors as furnished essays in the Magazine department, with the titles of their Essays. This account has been likewise made up from the copy marked by Mr Smellie for the use of his son, as already mentioned.

Dr Gilbert Stuart reviewed as follows:

Hawkesworths Voyages.—Animadversions on Mr *Adams* Grammar, by *Jo. Rich. Bushby*, assisted by his father *George Stuart*.—Remarks on the History of Scotland, by Sir

David Dalrymple.—*Chapmans* Treatise on Education.—*Wight* on Election Laws.—Archæologia, published by the Society of Antiquaries of London.—*Lelands* History of Ireland.—Institutes of Moral Philosophy, by *Dr Adam Ferguson.*—*Henrys* History of Great Britain.—*Howards* Siege of Tamor.—An Address to the Citizens of Edinburgh, relative to the Management of Herriots Hospital, by a free Burgess.—*Guthries* Geographical Grammar.—*Richardsons* Poems.—*Kameses* Sketches, only a part of it.—Origin and Progress of Languages, only vol. III. —*Gregorys* Legacy to his Daughters.—*Richardsons* Analysis of Shakespeare.—*Carstairs* State Papers, by *Jos. M'Cormick*, D. D.—*Whitakers* History of Manchester.—*Dr Duncan*, minister of Smallholm, on Infidelity.—*Wartons* History of English Poetry.—The Graham, an heroic Ballad, by *Dr Blacklock.*—*Gerards* Essay on Genius.—*Helvetiuses* Child of Nature.—*M'Laurins* Decisions in Criminal Cases.—*Perrys* Arithmetic.—*Aikens* Life of Agricola.—*Andersons* History of France.—The History of *Arsaces*, Prince of Betlis.—*Macphersons* History of Great Britain.—Religious Correspondence, in a series of letters to a Lady.—*Twisses* Travels through

Portugal and Spain.—*De Lolme* on the Constitution of England.—*Moirs* Vade Mecum, assisted by his father *George Stuart.*—*Justamonds* Translation of Abbé Resnals History.—*Craigs* Sermons—An Essay on Nothing.—Annals of Scotland, by Sir *David Dalrymple.*—*Huberti* Langueti Epistolæ, &c. accurante *D. Dalrymple* de *Hailes*, Esq.—*Gibbons* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.—*Voltaires* Young James, or the Sage and the Atheist.—*Tophams* Letters on the Diversions, &c. of the Scots.—*Pennants* Tour in Scotland, &c.

2. *Dr Gilbert Stuart* wrote the following Essays:

The Introduction to the Public.—Anecdotes of Scottish Literature.—A Constitutional Tract.—Character of *Mary* Queen of Scots.—A short Memoir of Principal *Carstairs.*—A Sermon.—A Memoir of *George Buchanan.*—Memoir of Dr *Pitcairn.*—Anecdotes of *Laura* and *Petrarque.*—Memoir of the Admirable *Crichton.*—Character of *John Knox.*—Character of *George Drummond*, Esq. &c.

3. Professor *William Baron* reviewed the following books:

His own Essay on the Plough.—*De Luc* on the Barometer, &c.—*Ogilvie* on Composition.—*Walkers* Sermons, vol. II.—*Simpsons* Elements of Conic Sections.—Sermon by the Reverend *R. Walker*, preached before the Governors of the Orphan Hospital.—*Baillies* Letters and Journals.—*Glenies* History of Gunnery.—Rev. Dr *John Erskines* Discourse, "Shall I go to war with my American brethren?"—*Campbells* Philosophy of Rhetoric, &c.

4. Reverend Dr *Thomas Blacklock* reviewed as follows:

A Treatise of Modern Falconry, by *James Campbell*, Esq.—A New System of Catholic Theology.—Poems, by the Author of the Sentimental Sailor.——*Beatties* Minstrel.—*Downmans* Infancy.——*Priestleys* Institutes.—*Priestleys* Remarks on Dr *Reids* Inquiry, &c.——*Hartleys* Theory of the Mind.——The Lusiad; or, The Discovery of India; an Epic Poem.—Remarks on Dr *Prices* Observations.—Remarks on a Pamphlet lately published by Dr *Price*, &c.

Dr Blacklocks Essays.—

Advantages of a Classical Education.—On the Education of the Blind.

5. Reverend *A. Gillies* reviewed as follows: *Monboddos* Origin and Progress of Language, the greater part of it.—*Gibbs* Display of the Secession Testimony, &c.

Rev. *A. Gillies* wrote the following Essay.
A modest Defence of Blasphemy.

6. The Rev. Mr *Nimmo* wrote the Essay on the Antiquities of Stirlingshire, which he afterwards extended into an octavo volume.

7. Professor *Richardson* of Glasgow reviewed,
Life of Dr *Alexander Monro, senior*, by his son Dr *Donald Monro*.

Professor *Richardsons* Essays.—
Adventures of *Omar*.—On the Tragedy of *Macbeth*.—The Indians, a Tale, &c.

In its embellishments, the engravings in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, which indeed were only attempted in the first and second volumes, are much below mediocrity, yet, as containing portraits of several distinguished Scots characters, faithfully copied from authentic originals, they merit being enumerated: To all of these biographical

sketches are added by the pen of Dr GILBERT STUART.

1. *Mary* Queen of Scots, tolerably copied from an engraving by *Vertue*, in vol. i. facing p. 57.

2. *William Carstairs*, S. T. P. Principal of the University of Edinburgh, vol. i. p. 113.

3. *Duncan Forbes*, of Culloden, Lord President of the Court of Session, vol. i. p. 183.

4. Mr *George Buchanan*, the celebrated Latin poet and historian, vol. i. p. 245.

5. *Alexander Monro*, sen. M. D. F. R. S. late Professor of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh, vol. i. p. 303.

6. *Archibald Pitcairne*, M. D. vol. i. p. 361.

7. *John Arbuthnot*, M. D. vol. ii. p. 417.

8. The Admirable *Crichton*, vol. ii. p. 465.

9. *John Knox*, the celebrated Reformer, vol. ii. p. 517.

10. *George Drummond*, Esq. Lord Provost of Edinburgh, vol. ii. p. 580.

DURING the subsistence of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, Dr GILBERT STUART wrote a very severe attack on the Elements of Criticism by Lord KAMES, which he transmitted to Mr SMELLIE for insertion

in the Review. But, in this instance, Mr SMELLIE successfully counteracted the intentions of his colleague, by altering the whole into a totally opposite tendency, converting the far greater part from harsh invective into reasonable and merited panegyric, in which guise the review was actually printed. On the day of publication, Dr STUART came to inquire at the printing-office "if the ——— was damned;" using a gross term which he usually indulged in when he had censured an author. Mr SMELLIE told him what he had done; and put a copy of the altered review into his hands. After reading the two or three introductory sentences, he fell down on the floor, apparently in a fit; but on coming to himself again, he good naturedly said, "WILLIAM, after all, I believe you have done right."

A PRINCIPAL cause of the failure of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review was derived from the harsh and unmannerly treatment of a work entitled, Of the Origin and Progress of Language, the favourite employment of the late learned, worthy, and respectable Judge in the Court of Session, JAMES BURNETT, Lord Monboddo; which,

owing to some unfortunately facile deferences to authority, and perhaps to certain mistaken biasses to a favourite theory, Dr STUART and the Reverend A. GILLIES anatomized and tortured without remorse, and perhaps much be ond reason.

THAT we are correct in this idea of the injury sustained by the Edinburgh Magazine and Review by this unprovoked and unnecessary severe attack on Lord MONBODDO, the following extract of a letter from the late respectable and experienced London bookseller, Mr JOHN MURRAY, in Fleet-street, to Mr SMELLIE, is a sufficient proof. Mr MURRAY was London publisher to the Edinburgh Magazine and Review: Perhaps it would have been of material benefit to the success of the concern if he had been a partner.

DEAR SMELLIE,

I AM sorry for the defeat you have met with. Had you praised Lord MONBODDO, instead of damning him, it would not have happened. Yours, &c.

J. MURRAY.

It may perhaps appear singular, however, that almost immediately after the failure of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, Dr Gilbert Stuart was invited up to London, and employed by Mr Murray as conductor of a new Review at London, called the English Review. Mr Murray, who was himself a very good judge of literary powers, could not be ignorant of those possessed by Dr Stuart, which he probably believed himself able to regulate within the bounds of decorous prudence; no very easy task; and he certainly knew that London was a wide field for literary knight-errantry, which could not be then endured in Edinburgh.

For the following account of the intimacy between Mr Smellie and Lord Monboddo, we are indebted to a respectable gentleman, long an inmate in the family of that learned Judge.—Mr Smellie was well known to the late Lord Monboddo of the Court of Session, and used to be a frequent visitor at what his Lordship, with much propriety, used to call his *learned suppers.* In imitation of the ancients, for whom he professed an enthusiastic attachment, Lord Monboddo

always made supper his principal meal, and his regular time of entertaining his friends. These learned suppers used to take place once a fortnight during the sitting of the Courts; and among the usual guests were the late Dr Black, Dr Hutton, Dr Hope, Dr Walker, Mr Smellie, and other men of science and learning, of whom Edinburgh at that time furnished an ample store. Besides these set parties, Mr Smellie was often invited to a private supper by Lord Monboddo; who was always anxious to see him when any part of his Lordships works or studies happened to relate to Natural History, the favourite pursuit of Mr Smellie. On these occasions, the conversation was peculiarly interesting; as each expressed his unbiassed sentiments with unreserved freedom. Though nothing but harmony prevailed for the most part, yet a little collision of opinion sometimes occurred, but this was only momentary. The first meeting between Lord Monboddo and Mr Smellie, after the Review of Harrises Philosophical Arrangements in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review was particularly interesting. How his Lordship felt on this occasion, will appear from the Preface to the third volume of the

Origin and Progress of Language, which appeared not long afterwards, and gave another opportunity for the Reviewers to attack his Lordship; and they according opened their whole artillery upon him on this occasion.

On occasion of this review, however, the critics themselves fell into a capital blunder. In the interpretation of a passage of Dionysius of Halycarnassus on Composition, which Lord Monboddo had quoted in the work then under their review, by unaccountably having recourse to the Latin translation, not of Hudson, for he has rendered the passage without ambiguity, but to some older editor, who had rendered a Greek expression by what is called in *Latin* the ablative absolute, and therefore left to the judgment of the reader the application of this disjointed Latin construction, either to what precedes or what follows, as he thinks best. The reviewers had the misfortune to apply this ablative the wrong way: and by this means converted their *own blunder* into a matter of triumph over the reputed knowledge of Lord Monboddo in Greek and Latin.

It is a certain fact, that these severe criticisms on the Origin and Progress of Language were the cause of the downfall of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review; and Mr Smellie very candidly acknowledged this to Lord Monboddo, whose friendship and attachment to his learned printer continued uninterrupted till the death of Mr Smellie, notwithstanding the continual and illiberal abuse of his Lordships works, which issued from Mr Smellies press.

Mr Smellie used sometimes to read his juvenile essays to Lord Monboddo, who was much amused and delighted by them; particularly with his Theory of Sleep and Dreaming, and with what he called his Tangible Theory, which was a curious Essay on Shaking Hands, &c.

Many very severe criticisms appeared in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review against the Origin and Progress of Language; but none of them gave the ingenious and rather paradoxical author nearly so much uneasiness as the following paragraph at the end of a Review of the Philosophical Arrangements by Harris, which was written by Mr Smellie.

"Upon the whole, Mr Harris, even in his present volume, with all its imperfections, has an elevation of sentiment that rises above the ordinary reach of mere *classical scholars*. He may be considered as a singular exception to a general and well founded observation, that those who have been remarkable for their skill in *Greek* and *Latin* have seldom discovered a *good taste*, or any talents for *philosophical discussion*. He gives a value to classical learning, unknown alike to the *pedant* and the *pedagogue*. He tires not his reader with verbal criticism; and it will not be disputed, that his efforts tend to illustrate the dark glimmerings of ancient philosophy."

Lord Monboddo took the allusions of this paragraph in great dudgeon, as levelled against himself particularly; and often teazed Mr Smellie ineffectually to inform him who was the author of this offensive review, in warding off which inquiries, Mr Smellie was often put to considerable difficulty.

In the year 1773, the late laborious and ingenious Dr Henry, then one of the ministers of Edinburgh, brought out the second

volume of his History of Great Britain. Dr Henry applied on this occasion to the late celebrated David Hume, earnestly entreating him to write an account of that volume for the Review in the Edinburgh Magazine; Mr Hume consented to gratify his wishes. When the manuscript appeared, and was read to the club of reviewers, the praises it contained were considered so overstrained, as to have been actually meant by Mr Hume to burlesque the author. It was therefore committed to the farther consideration of one of their number, who still continued of the same opinion, and who accordingly raised the encomiums to so high a pitch of extravagance, that no person could possibly have mistaken the meaning of the reviewer. In this state of exaltation, a proof was sent to Mr Hume for his perusal and corrections; who, to the astonishment of the members, sent them an angry letter, complaining loudly of the freedoms they had used with his manuscript, and declaring that he was perfectly sincere in the account which he had given of Dr Henrys History. Upon this Mr Humes altered review was cancelled; and a new one was written by a member of the society, condemning the book in terms per-

haps too severe; so that Mr Humes intention of serving Dr Henry proved not only abortive, but was the occasion of inducing a severe criticism on his work.

In the course of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, a person took it into his head to publish a book on Falconry; but found himself unable to write a preface, and applied to Mr Smellie for assistance, who accordingly wrote a preface for him, in which he turned the whole work into complete ridicule. The poor Falconer thought the preface a perfect masterpiece, and prefixed it to his work exactly as written by Mr Smellie. It was afterwards reviewed in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review in the most whimsical and ridiculous style, which effectually put the sale of the book to a stand. In the review, the preface is particularly taken notice of. This transaction occasioned the following letter to Mr Smellie from the Reverend A. Gillies, a gentleman of great abilities, one of the first rate reviewers in that Magazine, and author of an essay in the same publication, whimsically entitled a Modest Defence of Blasphemy. The letter has no date, but must have been written before the appearance of the review of the Treatise on Falconry, in the number

for October 1773, vol. i. p. 92. That review was drawn up by the late worthy and ingenious Dr Blacklock.

No. LXXVI.

The Rev A. Gillies *to Mr* William Smellie.

My Dear Sir, *No date.*

Nothing was ever more happily descriptive. You have hit off our ancient falconer inculpably well. I see him in the back apartment, rejoicing at his prospect of appearing as an author. Alas! the world is plenteous in disappointments, and amazingly bountiful too in bestowing them. He imagined his work, luckless wight! among the necessaries of life. How can it but grieve him, to see people set at least an equal value upon bread and butter? He is now convinced that the half is, on some occasions, greater than the whole. The agonies of his balked avarice wring his heart; and, to complete his distress, his vanity is also stabbed. It would go to your very soul to survey his prolix melancholy countenance. You would

imagine he had been just bereft by lightning of a wife and nine small children; sad calamity! I am naturally compassionate, and offer him consolation now and then, as thus: "Sir, let not this misfortune prey upon your vitals. The affair is not so deplorable as you fancy. Consider, I beseech you, that the honour of being called an author is a cheap acquisition, at the trifling loss in which that title has involved you. Never was there a greater author. You are the only man in the realm who can boast of a library of above five hundred volumes, all of your own composition! Think of that, Sir, and be happy." He growls, "Sink the honour! I want profit," and so refuses to be comforted.

I HAVE seen your proposals for a new Magazine; and, as you are concerned in it, my hopes of its success are very sanguine. The effusions of your own humour, if you have leisure to write, will afford matter of endless laughter. Such a Magazine is a right thing in our country. The Scotch have sense enough to instruct, and wit enough to divert one another: and you give them a creditable way of shewing both. Thus the

flimsy, frivolous things that come from London, to steal our money and vitiate our taste, will remain in the land of their nativity.

The stated period of publishing such compilements is, perhaps, hurtful to their reputation. You may not always be fortunate enough to furnish a monthly collection of clever original pieces. When necessity compels you to give your readers dull things, they lose all patience, and the character of your work sinks. What if you advertised you should publish sooner or later just as you have exquisite materials? The idea is full of respect for the public, and therefore catching. There is one way, but I dare not recommend it, of making the three kingdoms your customers. The undertakers of the Town and Country Magazine discovered much knowledge of human degeneracy, when they fell upon the idea of their tête-a-têtes. Your general invectives against vice excite no curiosity; nor is the matter much mended by conjuring up profligate phantoms, such as Damons and Celias. My Lord K—t, or my Lady P—s: Actual, existing, industrious sinners: That is the thing! This sort of

biography is wonderfully taking. 'Tis true, all the world will call you a confounded slanderous fellow; but, mind me, all the world will buy your slanders. You may look grave, and allege the reformation of individuals is your design. Ah, ha, ha! If I have any thing candid for your use, you shall have it. Yours, &c.

A. GILLIES.

IN consequence of the virulent severity of attack upon the Origin and Progress of Language, great offence, as has been already observed, was taken by many respectable persons at the manner in which the Review connected with the Edinburgh Magazine was carried on. Of this we have a specimen in the following correspondence on the subject, which took place between Mr SMELLIE and JOHN MACLAURIN, Esq. of Dreghorn, the son of the celebrated mathematician, COLIN MACLAURIN, who was elected to the Mathematical Professorship in the University of Edinburgh on the recommendation of the immortal NEWTON. Mr JOHN MACLAURIN was an excellent lawyer, and became a

respectable Judge in the Court of Session, under the title of Lord DREGHORN.

No. LXXVII.

From JOHN MACLAURIN, *Esq. to Mr* WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Edinburgh, 17*th November* 1776.

MR MACLAURINS compliments to Mr SMELLIE, has just now paid his account for the Edinburgh Review from No. xv. to No. xxxiii. but desires that no more numbers be sent to him, for a reason which he imagines will be easily guessed by Mr SMELLIE.

No. LXXVIII.

From Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* JOHN MACLAURIN, *Esq. Advocate.*

SIR, *Edinburgh*, 18*th November* 1776.

As I have a very high respect for your opinion, the card you were pleased to write

me yesterday has given me much anxiety. After revolving every circumstance, I find myself unable to discover any thing in my conduct that could ever have a tendency to displease you. In these circumstances, you will forgive me for expressing a desire to learn in what particular I may have inadvertently offended you, that I may have an opportunity of making every reparation in my power.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. LXXIX.

To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *from* JOHN MACLAURIN, *Esq.*

SIR, *No date.*

I AM extremely sorry that the brevity of my card, which was owing to my being in a hurry when I wrote it, has led you to imagine that it proceeded from any dissatisfaction with you personally. That could not be the case, as I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance. I long ago intended to have written such a card to Mr CREECH, but it

went out of my head. My reason, and my only reason, for giving up the Review is the shocking scurrility and abuse in the late articles of it concerning Lord Monboddos book. I differ in opinion in many things from his Lordship, yet I highly disapprove of the manner in which he has been treated by the reviewers; and every gentleman with whom I have talked upon the subject is of the same way of thinking. I therefore thought it my duty to discourage that work as far as I can. From the character which you bear, I am, with much regard, Sir, &c.

John Maclaurin.

No. LXXX.

From Mr William Smellie *to* John Maclaurin, *Esq.*

Sir, *No date.*

Your second letter gives me pleasure proportioned to the pain excited by your first. I am unwilling to trouble you in a matter in which you have no interest: but the polite attention you have shown me on this occa-

sion encourages me to hope for your indulgence while I communicate a few thoughts in as short bounds as I can.

Your resentment against the abuse of my Lord Monboddos book is just, and is founded on the principles of humanity and genuine criticism. Such has been the unfortunate situation of the proprietors of the Edinburgh Review, that they were often under the disagreeable necessity of printing and publishing many things which were utterly repugnant both to their judgment and to their feelings. With respect to my Lord Monboddo, for whom, both as a gentleman and a man of learning, I entertain the most respectful regard, Mr Creech and I remonstrated and pled, in the strongest terms, against the review of his second volume. When I saw the manuscript of the review of his third volume, I was most uncommonly shocked. I reasoned, I intreated, for a change in the whole tenor of it. But all the success I obtained was the alteration of a few words, which were still more indelicate and improper than the many harsh and ungentlemany expressions it contains. As to Mr Creech, I declare with

truth, that he never saw a word of it till the copies went to his shop for sale.

After perceiving that no change is now likely to be produced, either by reasoning or by intreaty, I have at last resolved to give up my concern in this paper, purely from the personal abuse that has been poured out upon Lord Monboddo, Dr Henry, and some others. In this resolution I am joined by Mr Creech and Mr Elliot.

Pardon this intrusion. It gives me some consolation that I have thus been accidentally led to declare my sentiments to a gentleman of your character and disposition; especially as I shall perhaps, some time or other, think it necessary to communicate them to the public. I am, Sir, &c.

William Smellie.

Mr Charles Elliot, mentioned in the foregoing letter as concerned in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, was some time ago a very spirited and successful bookseller in Edinburgh, who acquired a share of the adventure on the death of Mr Kincaid.

In consequence of the general dissatisfaction of the public at the improper conduct of Dr Stuart and others in carrying on the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, and the failure of sales, it was at length determined to be discontinued; and this was announced at the close of the number for August 1776, which seems to have been published about the 18th or 19th of that month.

"*** The publishers have to inform the numerous and respectable encouragers of this work, that the publication of it must be discontinued for some months. It will afterwards appear in an improved form; and proper notice will be given of the changes that are intended to be made."

From the two subsequent letters it will appear, that, so early as August 1774, two years before the discontinuance of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, an intention had been started of separating the Review department from the Edinburgh Magazine, and publishing them as entire distinct concerns; and to have superadded a newspaper to the

literary adventure. But as hardly any memorials remain of this project, any farther than as contained in these letters, they are left to speak for themselves, without any commentary, except that this plan was never carried into execution, and does not seem to have proceeded any farther than this correspondence.

No. LXXXI.

To Mr William Smellie *from Dr* Gilbert Stuart.

No date,—but must have been in August 1774.

Dear Bill,

Inclosed is Murrays letter, which you will consider attentively, and send me the result, that I may write to him. That was to have been done by Creech and you, but has not yet been thought of by either. The business we are about to engage in is too serious to be trifled with. * * * * * * * * *

I. It appears to me perfectly obvious that without a partner in London, we cannot pos-

sibly be supplied with books. And on our speedy supply of them the whole success of the work must depend. MURRAY seems fully apprized of the pains and attention that are necessary, has literary connexions, and is fond of the employment; let him therefore be the London proprietor.

II. I FORESEE that the labour which will rest upon you and me, in the event of this undertaking, will be immense in itself, and will be made more troublesome than it is naturally, by your having too much to do. * * * * * * There must therefore be some person in Edinburgh on whom we can fully rely, and who, on a moments notice, can buckle to work and do his business expeditiously. Such a person is Blasphemy GILLIES*; and that he may be acquired is, I think, obvious from the present poorness of his situation. Another reason calls strongly for his presence, or that of some person like him :—The establishment of our newspaper will require a great deal of attention, and one man in particular to look after it *as a whole*. It is easy

* This epithet was given him on account of an essay he wrote for the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, entitled A Modest Defence of Blasphemy.

to fabricate essays; but it is not easy to attend to all the minute circumstances necessary in the conduct of a paper. The former I can manage here; the latter is out of my power to manage; and that they must both be managed you will allow. I hold it then as perfectly obvious, that the presence of GILLIES is absolutely requisite.

THE next question is, How can we afford him an establishment? Let the shares in the Review be six; one for yourself, one for CREECH, one for MURRAY, one for GILLIES, and two for the conductor. Let the shares in the Newspaper be five; and let two of these go to GILLIES. Let him receive for his reviews at the rate of two guineas per sheet*; and, lastly, let him receive L. 30 per annum as your corrector.

LET this agreement be lasting, while GILLIES chuses to continue in Edinburgh and to act for the interests of the several works; and when his situation leads him from us, let him have an equivalent from the works esta-

* The modern Edinburgh Review gives L. 10. 10s. per printed sheet; so much has the value of literature in a commercial light become enhanced since 1774.

blished, in proportion to their annual sale, and to the trouble he has expended. All this is fair and genteel; and I know not any other way of acting with a gentleman.

III. Consider and weigh all these things with yourself; and, having done so, write me your sentiments; and send me the scroll of a letter to Gillies, proposing to him all these things; and be expeditious, for before this is settled we cannot write to Murray fully.

IV. If I receive your letters to-morrow, they may be sent off the day after. Shut yourself up for two hours after supper. Be explicit and full; and, in the mean time, let me know what books are sent off, besides Harwood and the Child of Nature; which, by the bye, might have been sent off three full weeks ago, as they have been so long in your possession.

As to the introductory paragraph about an extract from Kames, I wrote you fully about it ten days ago; and it is a pain to me to write fifty times on the same subject. It is odd that you will rather give one incessant trouble than keep a book of transactions, or lay aside the letters you receive with copy

inclosed. The extract from KAMES is laid aside to make way for extracts from PENNANT, which are more popular.

EXPLAIN to ******, who is by this time in town, the ridiculousness of his behaviour. It would seem that his servants are perfect idiots, and that he trusts to them. If I were in his place, and a servant once neglected to do what I had ordered him, he should never receive from me a second order.

THE Scots Magazine will not be refused, because there are many volumes. Let it be packed in parcels of ten volumes each.

STIRLINGSHIRE and other copy you shall receive in proper time. Let us wait a little, to catch any thing popular that may be sent.

Yours, &c.

GILBERT STUART.

No. LXXXII.

Mr JOHN MURRAY *to Dr* GILBERT STUART.

DEAR SIR, *London, 3d. August* 1774.

I AM favoured with yours of the 28th; and I approve of the scheme you mention to be in

agitation, of undertaking a Review by itself. I was always of opinion that the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review* would have done better without the Magazine part; and it will not sell the worse when you deprive it of that appendage.

But, although I like your idea of a Review by itself, it has some difficulties to overcome in its establishment, which I shall just run over as they occur to me.

1*mo*, You will consider that there does not appear to be sale at present in England for *two* reviews; for I look upon the *Critical Review* as barely to pay expences.

2*do*, A new Review will have to compete with the *Monthly*, a publication which is conducted with the greatest care and attention by Mr Griffith, who dedicates his whole time to the management and conduct of it.

3*tio*, The publication of an *Edinburgh Review* must be a month later in its appearance than the London ones; and so will be behind in its account of books.

These are the objections that I see just now to your plan, but which by care may be overcome; but it must be *very great care, and pains, and attention.*

A method of review for the large and small articles should be settled and adhered to in the execution of the work, with regard to their *length*, the *extracts*, and the *manner* of reviewing.

A month before publication, a considerable sum of money should be laid out in *advertising* in the London papers, and in the country papers of England, to the amount at least of sixty pounds.

The number of London Reviews sold in Scotland should, if possible, be ascertained, in order to calculate the probability of your success there.

It might also be taken into consideration whether an Edinburgh Review could be furnished for *sixpence.* No plates are necessary; and this price would give it an evident superiority *one way* over the London ones; and the price may be raised, with little danger, after the *first* year. If I mistake not, the

Monthly was a sixpenny publication at the beginning.

A CALCULATION should be made of the expence of publication, under the following heads:

1. Copy money.
2. Paper.
3. Printing.
4. Advertising.
5. Contingencies.

IT should be settled what person is to furnish books, and keep an exact list of all publications, which he must regularly scratch off as they are reviewed, and as often take notice of those that may be omitted.

WHAT I have mentioned I mean only as hints for the consideration of you and the partners. It may serve in part to give you a view of what is to be expected from the undertaking, and to prepare the proprietors, after they have come to a resolution of proceeding, to be assiduous and active in their different departments.

I THINK, from my situation, and my acquaintance with different gentlemen of taste

and learning, that I can prove of some service to the scheme, if it takes place. And, as it is long since I told you that I liked the idea of a Review much better than I did that of a Magazine, so I have no objection to take a share in the intended work, if it shall be found agreeable; and my attention and pains, as publisher, shall be as great as I can make them. Write me therefore at your convenience, as I am impatient to receive an account of this design at length. I am, &c.

J. MURRAY.

MR MURRAY, who was London publisher of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, was a very respectable and eminent bookseller in Fleet Street, London; where he succeeded to the business of Mr MILLAN, a Scotsman, who, to accommodate himself to the prejudices of the English, formerly strong against the Scots, changed his original name of MACMILLAN, by dropping the patronymic *Mack*, signifying *son of*. MACLIN the famous comedian, who was an Irishman, had, in a somewhat similar manner, changed his name of MACLANE to MACLIN; and ALMACK, a Scotsman well known in the fashionable end

of the town, by keeping a famous subscription-house in Pall Mall, nearly opposite the palace of St Jameses, altered his name from M'Caul. The original name of Mr John Murray was Mackmurray, under which name he served his country for several years as an officer of marines; and being reduced upon half-pay at the close of the war which ended in 1763, he purchased the stock in trade and good will of Mr Millan, then lately deceased, and imitated him in dropping the northern Mack. He was succeeded in business at his death by his son, the present Mr John Murray, who now carries on the bookselling business extensively in the same shop in Fleet Street.

As Dr Gilbert Stuart was a man of great learning and splendid talents, and a writer of much eminence and reputation in his day, a more extended account of him than could with propriety be introduced in this place, as connected with the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, will be found at the close of the present discussion.

During the time of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, a note appeared in that pub-

lication respecting a ball in Bathgate, which became the subject of a vexatious prosecution against the editors, at the instance of one JARDINE a schoolmaster. Some time afterwards, on a vacancy of one of the ministers of St Cuthberts parish, immediately on the western skirts of Edinburgh, the Reverend Mr BARRON, then minister of Whitburn, afterwards professor of logic in the University of St Andrews, became a candidate; and it would appear that some sinister means had been used to prejudise the heritors and inhabitants of the parish against that respectable gentleman. In these surmises, Mr SMELLIES name had been falsely implicated, as appears from the following expostulatory letter: But, as we do not wish to rake up the ashes of departed disputes, we have chosen to withhold the name of the person to whom it was addressed.

No. LXXXIII.

From Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* ******.

SIR,

To discover anxiety on account of trifling insinuations, that may tend in some measure

to affect character, is no indication of sense, or of a consciousness of integrity. But when malignant lies are invented, and seriously told in presence of respectable people, a man must have lost all respect for reputation, if he takes not proper steps to contradict them.

THE fact, Sir, I am about to narrate regards you personally; and, as I have a very high opinion of your honour and veracity, I doubt not but you will instantly do justice to yourself and the other gentlemen concerned.

THAT you lately delivered yourself, in a pretty numerous company, to the following effect, I have good authority for saying. The discourse occasionally turned upon the candidates for succeeding Mr STUART as minister of the West Church; when, according to my information, you observed, That it consisted with your knowledge that the Reverend Mr BARRON, one of these candidates, was the author of a note in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, which has lately been made the subject of a prosecution, at the instance of one JARDINE a schoolmaster in Bathgate; and that you had even an acknowledge-

ment to that effect from the mouths of Mr Creech and Mr Smellie.

Now, Sir, you must give me leave to tell you, that every single word in the above story, said to be told by you, is false,—and not only false, but not a single circumstance ever existed that could have the smallest tendency to give rise to it. You must see the intention. It has been invented with a view to injure Mr Barron, a gentleman whose character has already stood, and will stand, proof against the most malicious attacks. Mr Creech and I have been brought on the carpet, to add force to the malevolence of the invention.

The bearer will wait for a pointed and satisfactory answer, which I have a right to demand; and I doubt not you will feel a strong desire to comply.

If my information should happen to be wrong, which I confess would astonish me, you will not find me backward in asking your pardon for writing you in this manner.

I am, &c.

William Smellie.

P. S.—I FORGOT to mention that, when the above paragraph was written and printed, Mr BARRON, to my certain knowledge, was not nearer than twenty-three miles to its real writer; and that, as I have been in habits of friendship with Mr BARRON for some years, this story, if allowed to pass without notice, would make him regard me in a very despicable light.

IN the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which met in May 1775, a cause came before that venerable Court, of considerable temporary interest, and which produced a long and ardent debate. Mr FINLAY, minister of Dollar, was accused of having admitted Mr THOMSON to the charge of the parish of St Ninians, near Stirling, "in a manner highly disrespectful to the General Assembly, most injurious to Mr THOMSON, and very offensive and indecent to the congregation." It would greatly exceed all due bounds in the present biographical work to give any thing like an entire history of this singular transaction, which will be found detailed in the various parts of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, beginning at

No. viii. p. 446. In this place we have only alluded to it as connected with a virulent attack upon that Magazine, by the Reverend Mr Charles Nisbet, one of the ministers of Montrose, in consequence of a report given in that work of the debate in the Assembly upon this cause, and in which he complained of his speech upon the occasion having been unfairly reported. As Mr Smellie made a conspicuous figure in the consequent literary warfare with Mr Nisbet, and victoriously drove him vanquished from the field, it becomes proper to quote the speech as reported in the Magazine, and then to give the controversial writings which passed between Mr Nisbet and Mr Smellie at full length.

The report of Mr Finlays speech was inserted in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review for June 1775, vol. iii. p. 363. The first violently abusive letter from Mr Nisbet appeared in the Caledonian Mercury for Wednesday 19th July 1775. Mr Smellies answer appeared in the July number of the Magazine 1775, vol. iv. p. 455. To this Mr Nisbet chose to make a reply in the Caledonian Mercury of Wednesday 30th August 1775. This appeared too late in the month

of August for Mr SMELLIE to write a complete answer; but he took notice of it in the last page of the Magazine for that month, vol. iv. p. 504. with a promise of honouring Mr NISBET with a total refutation in the succeeding number; which promise he most effectually performed in the September number of the Magazine, 1775, vol. iv. p. 555. Mr NISBET was thoroughly and completely satisfied with the sound dressing he had received, and never adventured to renew the combat. The several pieces above alluded to are inserted in their due order, and require no farther commentary except this: Mr NISBET actually followed the advice given him by Mr SMELLIE; he transported himself to America, and died there a citizen of the Independent States. In this curious dispute, Mr SMELLIE gives strong instances of his powers of controversial satire, a vein of writing in which he seldom indulged his pen.

REPORT OF MR NISBETS SPEECH.

Edinburgh Magazine and Review, vol. iii. p. 363.

Mr Nisbet of Montrose made several satyrical remarks on what Dr M'Cormick had said respecting his zeal for religion, and his trembling for the ark of God. He alleged that many of the members appeared to be more violent than even some of the Popes themselves had been in cases of a similar nature; and, quoting some instances from his notes, which he said shewed the great moderation of the infallible pontiff, when compared with the sentiments of those who were for inflicting a severe censure on Mr Finlay; and thus he endeavoured to throw ridicule on the whole proceedings. He concluded by saying, that having formerly given offence * to delicate minds by quoting scripture in that house, he would at this time submit to their consideration a passage from the great Shakespeare, and there it was.

* And very justly, if he quoted scripture ludicrously.—Edin. Mag. and Rev.

He then read * two passages from that poet, relating to the use and abuse of power, which would have been very proper if the Assembly had been going to behead Mr FINLAY, or even to depose him.—He was for giving Mr FINLAY a rebuke.

MR NISBETS FIRST LETTER.

Caledonian Mercury, 19*th July* 1775.

To the Printer of the Caledonian Mercury.

SIR,

SUCH is the condition of our times, that those who have no inclination to trouble the public are forced, by the restless malice of scribblers, to appear in their own defence. In reading the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review* for June last, I find an account given of my speech in the General Assembly, in the cause of Mr FINLAY, which is equally false

* If it be true, that tragi-comedy is the justest picture of nature, Mr NISBET rather mended SHAKESPEARE; for it was really comical to hear the gentleman read two very sublime passages of that author, in the same flat and woful tone, in which a Fife herd repeats his catechism; and with the same regard, too, to emphasis and punctuation.—Ed. Mag. and Rev.

and malicious. I not only alleged, but proved, from authentic testimony, that the Church of Rome had shown greater moderation, in cases exactly similar, than those who were for suspending Mr FINLAY: I quoted two instances of this from MATTHEW PARIS; the one of a French priest, who published a sentence of excommunication according to his own conscience, and not according to the Popes order, without suffering any censure whatever; the other of ROBERT GROSTHEAD, then Bishop of Lincoln, who peremptorily refused to execute an order of INNOCENT IV. and who was cleared in a full Consistory of Cardinals, summoned upon that occasion. I observed that the great design of Christian discipline was the extinction of offences, and bringing offenders to repentance; and that as Mr FINLAY had, in my opinion, removed the offence by his acknowledgment, we were obliged, by the laws of our religion, to forgive him; in proof of which, I said I could have quoted many passages of scripture; but as I had formerly offended some tender consciences, and had been called to order for quoting scripture in that house, I would give them the same sentiments from SHAKESPEARE, whose divinity I

thought very orthodox; and I still think that the passages I quoted apply to the case of Mr FINLAY, even though it was not proposed to behead him. Upon this Mr Reviewer has a short note, hinting that I had been very properly called to order, *if I had quoted scripture ludicrously:* Most true; but who told him that I had quoted scripture ludicrously? The Reviewer does not say so; and if he did, the entire speech referred to, being still extant in the *London Magazine* for June and July 1773, if I remember right, will convince any one of the falsehood of his insinuation. If you would grant Mr Reviewer his *postulatum*, he would be in no pain to establish his conclusion; but, unluckily for him, in the present case, his argument rests upon a lie of his own invention. This dark and sceptical mode of calumniating, I take to be entirely new, and peculiar to this author; though I remember an old logical brocard, *posito quolibet, sequitur quodlibet*, from which some may think that it had been known in former times. The Reviewer seems to have been greatly at a loss for matter of criticism, when he descends to take notice of my pronounciation, which, though not censured by better judges, he

thinks *flat and woful*, and fitter for the Assemblys Catechism (of which he seems to have no great esteem) than for so sublime an author as SHAKESPEARE. I do not pretend, Sir, to be a master of theatrical pronounciation; and if I was, I would avoid it in a discourse addressed to an assembly of grave divines, content that I was understood, as I am sure I was, by the General Assembly; but the truth is, I know as little of stage pronounciation as I do of the tone in which a certain modern critic lately delivered an oration against Christianity, to a company of oister women in a gin shop at Musselburgh, for which *meritorious* performance he was rolled in the kennel by his audience; *and very justly, if he quoted scripture ludicrously.* He says that my manner of reading tragedy was *comical:* It may be so; but I cannot help thinking that his manner of reasoning is at least equally so, when he infers that, because the passage I quoted was an argument against beheading CLAUDIO, therefore it could not be proper unless the Assembly had been going to behead Mr FINLAY, or to depose him, which is a sort of ecclesiastical decapitation. I know not why this author has thought proper to abuse me

in this illiberal manner, unless it is in resentment of two letters which I published not long ago in the *Weekly Magazine*, in defence of the work of a friend, unjustly attacked by this author in his first number, though I carefully abstained from all asperity of language. It may, perhaps, be thought needless to defend ones self against the accusations of an author so incapable of the task he has undertaken, as this Reviewer seems to be. If I had been so captious as he, I might have told the world long ago of his ignorance, in publishing an old fable from *Ariostos Orlando Furioso*, canto xxix. as the real history and transactions of a Scots Highlander in 1747, which he did in his Magazine for January 1774; or I might just now have wrote you a letter, extolling his skill in chronology, for telling us, in his last number, p. 392. that the name of *Physician* began to be used in France and Italy about the year 1750. But so great is the malice of this author, that he spares not even his own party. The Reverend Dr M'Cormick had, in the heat of debate, said, that he trembled for the ark of God; *and, though no prophet*, he would stretch out his arm to save it. A candid critic might easily have discerned,

from the train of the Doctors speech, that he meant to say, *and, though no priest*, he would stretch out his arm to save the ark. Every body knows that it was the business of the priests to take care of the ark, Josh. iii. 6. No doctor in divinity could be supposed to be ignorant of this; but we never read that the prophets had any business with it, except that David, a prophet, once danced before it. But it seems this Reviewer did not know that Eli was no prophet; for he makes Dr M'Cormick say what he did not say, and what he was incapable of saying, that he felt something of the zeal of the ancient *prophet*, when his heart trembled for the ark of God. If Mr Reviewer had not forgot his catechism, he would surely have known that there was some difference betwixt a *prophet* and a *priest;* and his ignorance of this is but a poor excuse for having chronicled, in his periodical performance, the casual mistake of a reverend gentleman who had never done him any injury. I would advise this author, instead of dully aiming at wit, or abusing innocent people by hypothetical slander, to study the true spelling of the English language, in which he seems remarkably deficient, that we may not read

again, as in his last number, of *cirtical* notes writ by Mr GRAY, p. 343. drest *deer* skins worn by the Americans, p. 347. or of reflection assuming the *sensorial* dignity, p. 353. not to mention many other blunders that would disgrace the lowest publication in Europe. I know it is alleged by some, that this author, in his account of our church matters, is but the tool of another person, whom he is under the necessity of pleasing; and it may be thought, that the drubbing merited by the servant, would be more properly bestowed on the master, who sets him on; but, as I have no legal evidence of the truth of this supposition, I must take the office of a Reviewer to be a responsible office, and conduct myself accordingly. If he is indeed a hireling, I must pity him, and shall give him no more disturbance. Let him lie on, and please his master. I shall take my leave of him in the words of JUNIUS TIBERIANUS, Præfect of Rome, to FLAVIUS VOPISCUS, an ancient Reviewer, *Scribe ut libet, securus; quod velis, dicas, habiturus mendaciorum comites quos* HISTORICÆ ELOQUENTIÆ *miramur auctores.* I am, Sir, your constant reader, and humble servant,

CHARLES NISBET.

Montrose, July 12. 1775.

MR SMELLIES ANSWER.

Edinburgh Magazine and Review, Vol. iv. p. 445.

To the Rev. Mr CHARLES NISBET, *Minister of the Gospel at Montrose.*

REV. SIR, *Edinburgh, August* 1. 1775.

GIVE me leave to address you on the subject of your publication in the Mercury of the 19th, and Weekly Magazine of the 20th of July last. As the whole of that production is a direct attack against the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, and against a particular gentleman who only contributes occasionally his assistance to that Paper, the Printer, who must necessarily be acquainted with every circumstance relative to it, thinks himself called upon to undeceive the public with regard to many false insinuations you have made. You will pardon me for applying the word *false* to the composition of a minister of the gospel of truth. It is indeed a series of falsehoods. But perhaps you are not directly chargeable with an infringement of the laws of truth. You may have been misinformed. You may have been instructed by some designing friend; the spirit of

party may have shut your eyes; in the warmth of passion, you may have been seduced to wander from truth, and yet to deceive yourself with an illusive notion of rectitude. I know not whether any of these theories will explain your conduct, and make it consistent with integrity.—After I have stated the facts, let the Public judge, and draw the proper conclusions.

You begin by observing, that the account given in the Edinburgh Magazine of your speech in the General Assembly, with regard to Mr FINLAYS cause, was both 'false and malicious;' and that you had proved, from history, the moderation of the church of Rome in similar cases, to be superior to that of those members who thought Mr FINLAY merited the censure of suspension. You likewise asserted, that you could have brought evidence from Scripture to the same purpose; 'but,' to use your own words, 'as I had formerly offended some tender consciences, and had been called to *order* for quoting scripture in that house, I would give them the same sentiments from SHAKESPEARE, whose divinity I thought very orthodox.' Upon this, you proceed, 'Mr Reviewer has

a short note, hinting that I had been very justly called to order, *if I had quoted Scripture ludicrously.* Most true; but who told *him* that 'I had quoted Scripture ludicrously?' In the appearances you make in the General Assembly, I have no interest; but, I humbly think, that the above passage of your letter has a most ambiguous aspect. Did the General Assembly call you to *order* for simply *quoting scripture?* To account for this fact, there is but one alternative; either your reverend brethren will not allow the quoting of scripture in their court, or they thought that you, in quoting, acted not with that gravity which every Christian ought to observe when he appeals to the sacred writings in support of his arguments. As a proof that you did not quote scripture in a ludicrous manner, you refer to the London Magazine for June and July 1773, where the entire speech is recorded. Of this I know nothing. I never saw the speech. But Mr Nisbet knows, that the mode of delivering a speech, and its appearance when printed, are often very different. There are certain tones, grimaces, grins, and shrugs, which have the power of throwing a species of ridicule upon matters of the most serious im-

port; and Mr NISBET need not be informed that mode, and gesture, and leer, exceed the limits of the typographic art. But, throwing all fancies of this kind aside,—the note in the Edinburgh Magazine charges you not with *quoting Scripture ludicrously:* It only justifies the propriety of the Court in calling you to order, on the supposition that you had endeavoured to excite a laugh by a ridiculous application of some Scripture passages.

WHAT I principally intended by copying your own words in the above passage of your letter was, to set you and the readers of this work right with regard to a circumstance of some importance to a gentleman who has suffered repeated insults and much personal abuse, which generally proceeded from want of discernment, and sometimes, I fear, from malevolence. This gentleman you have thought proper to consider, without any evidence, as the writer of the account of the proceedings of the General Assembly, and indeed as the author of the whole Magazine and Review. Now, Sir, let me assure you, from perfect knowledge, that he is not the author of that account,—that he did not attend a single sederunt of last Assembly,—

that he had no knowledge of you till he saw your name at the bottom of a libel against him in the Caledonian Mercury,—that he writes much less of the Edinburgh Magazine than any of the gentlemen concerned with it, —that many numbers bave been published of which he composed not a single essay or review; and yet every article, however opposite in stile and manner, has been attributed to him. These facts are material to be known for the sake of those who are incapable of distinguishing the composition of one man from another.

Another mistake must still be rectified. The gentlemen who review books you consider to be responsible for such articles as appear in the department of the Magazine alloted to essays. You certainly cannot be ignorant that these essays are often sent us by unknown hands; and that most of them are received in the printers-box. In these the reviewers are not interested. When papers favourable to one party are inserted, the Magazine is equally open to compositions on the other side, if they be written with propriety.

Will you now indulge me in a few expostulations? What induced you to point out a

particular person as the author of that account which offends you so much? And, after you had, contrary to internal evidence arising from the account itself, fixed upon a person who could not possibly be the author, how came you to say that his argument rested upon a lie of his own invention? If there was any lie in the case, it is obvious that it must have been the invention of your own brethren in the General Assembly; and this, as I observed before, appears from your own words. Are you aware of the proper answer to such treatment? Does it indicate either a gentleman or a scholar, to retail calumny in the language of a tinker? To connect the account of your speech more closely with the reviewers, you affect to consider two papers published by you in the Weekly Magazine against them, as the source of their resentment. This, Sir, is another mistake, founded in vanity and self-importance. None of the reviewers ever knew you to be a writer against them in any periodical publication, till you were thus pleased to inform them. Many mean and contemptible attacks have appeared against them; and they would never have conjectured them to be the manufacture of clergymen, who

ought, and are generally supposed to be men of some learning and ability.

You seem at a great loss to find examples of this supposed reviewers ignorance. The following instance is not a little curious, and may be considered as a specimen both of your candour and learning. "If," you observe, "I had been as captious as the reviewer, I might have *told the world* long ago of his *ignorance*, in publishing an old fable from Ariostos Orlando Furioso, canto 29. as the real history and transactions of a Scots Highlander in 1747, which he did in his Magazine for January 1774." Here, Sir, I am sorry to remark you have had the satisfaction of *telling the world* what will never recommend you as a man of candour and veracity. The two stories, though there be a similarity in their catastrophe and the methods employed to avoid impending danger, are perfectly different. The fable of Ariosto relates a *fictitious* stratagem used by a *fictitious* lady, whom the poet names Isabella, to prevent the violation of her chastity. The anecdote of the Highland sergeant, recorded by the Abbé Resnal, relates the manner in which the sergeant actually deceived some savage Indi-

ans who had taken him captive, and were about to torture him with their accustomed barbarity. Where now lies the charge of ignorance? Besides, to the title of this very anecdote, there stands an asterism referring to a note at the bottom of the page, which contains the following words: "Translated from the Abbé Resnals History of the European Settlements in the two Indies." Did you really overlook this note? or did you suppress the truth, that you might have an opportunity of gratifying your resentment against the Edinburgh Magazine? You certainly have sagacity enough to have discovered, long before this time, that hardly a real incident can happen in human life, to which a similar fiction may not with ease be found in ancient or modern fable; and if you can read the French language, and will consult the Abbé Resnal, you will find the present incident to have been a real one. It is wonderful how you allow your passion to expose you!

And how has it happened, Sir, that your temper has been so completely ruffled? Is it merely because, in the account of your speech in last Assembly, the writer hap-

pened to say, that you repeated *plays* "in the same flat and woful *tone* in which a Fife herd repeats his catechism?" My dear Sir, there seems to be nothing material in this charge,—nothing that could discompose a sober and well regulated mind. The *tone* of your voice may be misrepresented. I cannot decide in this matter, for I never had the pleasure of hearing your oratory. It is really astonishing, that a person who is a clergyman, and who doubtless conceives himself to be a gentleman, and is in fact so great a scholar as to be able to read ORLANDO FURIOSO, should thus lose his temper, and abuse innocent people, for no better reason than because it has been alleged that the structure of his windpipe does not qualify him for the *stage!*

CIRTICISM, *dear*, and *sensorial*, are exhibited as further specimens of ignorance in the reviewer; and you have the singular politeness to recommend to his perusal ENTICKS Spelling Dictionary. These, Sir, you must know to be typographical errors, for which the printer alone is answerable. This circumstance notwithstanding, you insist, that these and similar blunders would disgrace the low-

est publication in Europe! Here the fury of resentment has again made you degenerate into meanness and disingenuity. You cannot be ignorant of the impossibility of avoiding literal escapes in periodical works, which admit not of that deliberate attention which is bestowed in correcting books. The insinuation, let me tell you, is both false and ungrateful; for you cannot surely have forgotten your late elevation from a servile station in a *printers shop* to the more dignified character of minister of the Gospel, and spouter of *plays* in the General Assembly. I am ashamed to dwell longer on this circumstance. It appears to indicate an undistinguishing rage, that would devour both friends and foes, and for which no proper apology can possibly be invented.

As to your wit about the reviewers observing that the name of *physician* began to be used in France about the year 1750, it is perfectly ridiculous. You affect to consider this as an error of chronology, when it is merely a mistake of the press. For, a little lower, it is said, "The appellation of physician can be traced back to the year 1150;" so that, in the former passage, there can be no doubt but 1150 was meant, in place of

1750. But you had not, it seems, penetration enough to discover this. And as to Dr M'Cormicks making use of the word *prophet*, there is no dubiety, even by your own account; yet you censure the reviewer as abusing Dr M'Cormick, by applying a term that was actually used by him.——This is indeed folly in its greatest excess.

There is another charge against the person whom you have been chiefly solicitous to calumniate, which I have authority to assure you is an atrocious and abominable falsehood. It is where you accuse him of violating the laws of his country, and of profaning religion. I will not pretend to account for this flight of yours. It is not enough, to say that it is false, vulgar, and indecent: it seems to border on distraction and lunacy.

In fine, in order to render the Edinburgh Magazine odious to a certain party in the church, you insinuate that the reviewers are the tools of *another person;* and that they are obliged to obey the dictates of their master. This insinuation, allow me to inform you, has not the smallest foundation. The gentleman you allude to, and who cannot be misunderstood, never took any concern in the

Review; and the reviewers know no party, unless when they meet with injurious and false attacks, similar to the contents of your letter.

THIS correction and notice you owe to my anxiety as a man of business. You may take it in what part you please. It is sufficient for me that I do my duty; and that, Sir, I would do, if a thousand persons of your character stood in my way. I will not anticipate the reflections which your misconduct will suggest to you. It pains me that you have yielded so much to your passions; and I am sorry that the religion you have been called to teach has so little influence on your behaviour. Permit me to wish you a calmer temper, and a sounder understanding.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

MR NISBETS REPLY.

Caledonian Mercury, 30th August 1775.

To the AUTHOR *of the* EDINBURGH MAGAZINE *and* REVIEW.

SIR,

I HAVE read over your *very polite* letter to me of the 1st August, which exhibits a sufficient

specimen of your *good manners*, and convinces me that you have kept the best company. Pray, Sir, how do you contrive to write so charmingly? I am certain you must have consulted the *Complete Letter Writer*, and the *Academy of Compliments*, before you could collect such a profusion of rhetoric as appears in your epistle. I observe that it is subscribed by your printer, which I attribute to your great modesty. Perhaps you thought you could lurk as safe under that cover as ACHILLES in petticoats, or the Grand CYRUS under the name of ARTAMENES; but your great talents shine through every disguise. If you would publish a volume of such letters as your last, you would put down CHESTERFIELD and the Marchioness de SAVIGNY; so that Mr DODSLEYS property, though secured at so great expence, would be of no use to him.

BUT, to come to the contents of your letter. I address myself to the Author of the Proceedings of the General Assembly, and of the letter of August 1st, whether they are the same or different persons. You call my letter a *series of falsehoods;* but as you have not proved any such against me by

proper evidence, that charge must return from whence it came. When I ask who told you that I had quoted scripture ludicrously, you say, that "this has an ambiguous aspect," as you are loth to confess yourself the inventor of this calumny. But I must hold you for the inventor, till you produce your informers, as you are the first and only person that ever said or supposed such a thing. I referred you to the entire speech in question, that you might be convinced by your own eyes of the falsehood of your slanderous supposition; but it seems you did not choose to be convinced. You own that *you never saw the speech;* and yet you must needs be making criticisms on it, by mere conjecture and imagination, to infer a crime against me. Is this the way that you review books? Your alternative is an imperfect one. The General Assembly neither called me to order simply for quoting scripture, nor did any of them allege that I had quoted it in a manner unbecoming a Christian; but some of them thought it disrespectful to their dignity, to have a passage quoted, which some might apply to certain parts of their own conduct, though I applied it only to an inferior judicatory. As you are

so little versant in the Scripture as to make ELI a prophet, in the name of a great Doctor of this church who knows better, I must set down the passage at length. It is from a real prophet, MALACHI ii. 7, 8. "But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law: ye have corrupted the covenant of LEVI, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law." I quoted this passage in great seriousness, being deeply alarmed at the practice of buying and selling benefices, now said to be so frequent among us. With what front, then, could you, Mr Author, say, or wantonly suppose, that I had quoted scripture ludicrously? But you have another trick in reserve. You suppose there might be certain *shrugs, grins, or grimaces*, which might still denominate it ludicrous, that are not within the limits of the typographic art. In this too you are quite mistaken, as the only person who complained of me, sat with his back towards me while I spoke, and so could not see any of these mysterious shrugs, &c. which you imagine. It is curious to observe, that after depriving me

of every power of elocution, you immediately dress me up as a complete actor, when it suits your purpose of detraction. I have then the *dicentis gestus, in essus, discursus, omnibusque motibus animi consenstaneus vigor corporis*, as PLINY words it. This is a specimen of your candour.

WHAT you say of my attributing the account of the Assembly to a particular gentleman, is entirely your own imagination, as I know not who was the author of that account, and so could have no particular person in view. I see you are a dealer in conjectures, and can turn them to good account. You first suppose that I was in a great passion when I wrote my letter, and then you gravely reprove me for it. But you think too highly of yourself, if you imagine that so minute an object as the sting of an obscure Reviewer could put me in the least passion. On the contrary, I never would have taken the least notice of your vile observations, had I not been pressed by the importunity of friends; so that all your fine declamation on this head falls entirely to the ground. Surely, your understanding and your candour must have been *out of town*,

when you made this fine discovery. Did you really mistake the specimens I gave of *professed captious* criticism, for serious observations, and indications of mighty passion? I only gave you a string of observations, like your own with regard to me, and in your own language and manner, as nearly as I could imitate it. If they offend you, you have yourself only to blame. Your criticism on my reading, I thought sufficiently obviated by retaliating on your spelling. The irony was visible to any that were willing to see it. You take it ill that your Magazine should be compared to the lowest publication in Europe. You have made it so in effect by your last letter, which, for scurrility and violence, is not to be matched by any of the publications of Mr Edmund Curl, your worthy predecessor. You can make low comparisons enough, but you would not have them retorted upon yourself. Please learn to do as you would be done by. You tax me with using the language of a *tinker*, by which I suppose you mean a *reviewer*, these gentry being a kind of literary or book-tinkers, who commonly make as sad work, and use as coarse language as their sable brethren of the hammer. I should be ashamed to use

their language, unless in irony, or to themselves.

You call all the strictures that have been published on your Magazine mean and contemptible, which is a very short and convenient way of answering them; but perhaps the only one of which you are capable. The faults which disgrace your work are not of the typographical kind. They are much more important. Your fulsome encomiums on the blasphemous works of the Abbé Resnal, and your commendation of Hawksworths obscenities, prove that sceptics and infidels have no small share of your charity; while your reproaching the memory of Mr Patrick Hamilton, upon mere conjecture, and your unworthy treatment of the Rev. Dr Henry and Mr Walker, shew that you are no friend to good men, or sincere Christians. I cannot but think it an honour done me to suffer in so good company, and to be reviled by those who have reviled such men as these. I cannot admit your story of the Highland sergeant to be true; and if you observe the manner in which the Abbé Resnal introduces it, you will find that he does not affirm it. I must call it ignorance

to mistake fable for history: If you had made the story yourself, I would have called it forgery. And I confess I could have no great opinion of a persons learning, who could not distinguish the history of ALEXANDER the Great, from that of *Jack the Giant-killer*, or the *Seven Wise Masters*.

You complain that I attribute the compositions of one person to another. I know none of your gentlemen behind the curtain, and so cannot distinguish their productions. I think nothing is more simple than that each should take what praise or blame is his own, and not meddle with what belongs to others. But it is very unlucky for one to receive a stab in the dark from a society of nameless gentlemen, as one knows not whom to complain of, whether Mr Publisher, Mr Printer, or Mr Reviewer, or the whole *Dunciad* in conjunction. When a charge is made against one gentleman, another gentleman, who was not charged, nor called, stands forth to defend him, and to deny the fact. This is mighty convenient, but not quite fair. If a society of gentlemen, indicted at the Old Bailey, were to be allowed to be witnesses and compurgators for one another,

in this manner, it would no doubt save a great many lives.

You reproach me with having been bred in a printers shop; a sure proof that the letter was not wrote by a printer, who could never reckon his own profession an indignity. But how you think it an indignity for one clergyman to be bred in a printing house, any more than for another to have been bred in an ale-house, I am at a loss to imagine, and would propose it as a problem to the curious.

You call me a spouter of plays in the General Assembly; but your *great learning* hindered you from knowing that St Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, and Cicero, in his oration *pro Vatinio*, have quoted plays as well as I did. I can bear any epithet that applies to such men as these. The Younger Pliny treats a remark like yours, upon my reading plays, with great contempt: *Cur tragœdiam, quæ non auditorium, sed scenam et actores postulat, recitari concedunt?—At harum recitatio usu jam recepta est: num ergo culpandus est ille qui cœpit?* How the allusion to a modern critic

could have given you such offence, or have been thought to point out a particular gentleman, unless that gentleman is conscious of guilt, I am unable to imagine. Critics are a tribe almost as numerous as caterpillars or politicians; so that any charge against one of these must seem very far from a particular one. But your denying the charge is superlatively comical. You say you are authorised to do so; but pray, Sir, by whom? Are you Advocate-general for all the critics and profligates of Great Britain? If so, till you produce your commission, your denial must go for nothing.

You accuse me of endeavouring to make your Magazine odious to a certain party in this Church; but you are not aware how much you have done that way yourself, especially when you constantly call a body of clergymen (inferior in nothing, except numbers, to their opponents) by the name of the *wild party*. This proves the truth of the remark you make in your preface, that "you have declined joining with any of the religious factions in Scotland;" and is no great invitation for them to write in your Magazine. You likewise call those who would

exalt church-authority, in some cases, above the rights of conscience, the *moderate party*, which is as complete Irish as when you tell us in your last number, p. 403. of "a canoe *appearing* to two persons fast asleep on the banks of lake Ontario." I hinted it as the opinion of others, that the Reviewers had a master, whom they were under the necessity of pleasing. But you have convinced me, that the gentleman in question knew nothing of your last number, as he never uses language like yours. You say, that it is observable, that the only Wilkites among the clergy (I suppose you mean friends to liberty and the constitution) are a few of the *wild party*. You are doubly mistaken to my knowledge. They are neither a few, nor wholly of that party, who wish well to liberty and the faith of charters. But you are quite surprising when you tell us, that the only Jacobites of the clergy in the rebellion 1745 were of that party. They must be very *wild* principles indeed, that incline people at once to such opposites as Jacobitism and Liberty, passive obedience and the constitution. A philosopher must be diverted by *so bizarre an appearance.* If the principles of the Wilkites and Jacobites are the same, as

you attribute them to the same persons, pray why is not Mr WILKES preferred at Court?

BUT I am determined to write no more on this subject. You were the aggressor, and have no right to complain of my defending myself. I have even a title to the last word. If you use foul language, you can neither disturb nor hurt me. All the regret I have suffered is that of having lost some pages of St AUGUSTINE, while I have been animadverting on your *genteel* performance. You say you wish me a calmer temper and a sounder understanding. Pray, Sir, next time you put on your wishing-cap, be so good as wish me your polite manners, and your happy talents for criticism.

I SHALL not presume to offer you any advice; but you will accept a hint from an old rhetorician, by some mistaken for CICERO. *Desine bonos petulantissima consectari lingua: Desine morbo procacitatis isto uti: Desine unumquemque moribus tuis æstimare. His moribus amicum tibi facere non potes: videris velle inimicum habere.* I am, in all good humour, and with all deserved esteem,

Sir, your very humble servant,

Montrose, 21. *Aug.* 1775. CHARLES NISBET.

NOTE FROM MR SMELLIE.

The Edinburgh Magazine and Review, vol. iv. p. 504.

☞ Mr Nisbets second letter appeared in the Caledonian Mercury of Wednesday August 30th, a period of the month when it was impossible to answer it completely; and before two days of September have passed, it will be on the road to oblivion. The readers of this work, who are disposed to take a peep at it, will remark a beautiful confusion of ideas, not unworthy of the reverend writer, who found it difficult to reply to arguments which were irrefragable, and who, it is probable, in evidence of some of his falsehoods, has not yet found leisure to subborn his witnesses, and to prepare against their detection. His first letter showed him to be not only weak, but worthless. His second confirms his first; and, if the importunity of his friends can prevail with him to write a third, it may possibly apologize for both, by discovering that his wits are turned the seamy side

outwards. The letter he has just published is addressed to an imaginary personage; for a pamphlet which evidently arises from compilation, and from the compositions of different writers, cannot, without fatuity or madness, be imputed to one man. But this flight is rather to be pitied than wondered at. It has, however, its use. It prevents him from entering into close combat with the printer, whose pen he has reason to dread; and who, it would seem, cannot, on that account, be the author of his own letter. The Printer, in return, by a similar politeness, might fancy him to have received, in his, the assistance of the reverend gentlemen whose panegyric he has pronounced. For though the snappishness of it might well be supposed to be the genuine effusion of Mr NISBET, its solemn nothingness might belong to Dr HENRY, and its peevishness might not improperly proceed from Mr WALKER*. In one view, the letters

* These gentlemen he mentions particularly in his letter. As to ELI, whom, in the wildness of his rage, he has ventured to abuse, if he will consult EPIPHANIUS, he will find him marked as a *prophet*. And as to the *canoe appearing to two persons fast asleep* the passage is quoted dishonestly, a thing not uncommon to Mr NISBET. See Magazine for July, p. 403, and Mr SMELLIE's letter in the last number.

subscribed by him excite regret. Those who love religion, and who are void of a factious spirit, will observe with sorrow so much ignorance, levity, and disingenuity, in a teacher of truth, and a preacher of righteousness. "Wo to the world," says Dr ERSKINE, "because of offences. It must needs be that offences come; but wo to the man, *double wo to the minister, by whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he be cast into the depths of the sea.*" This text Mr NISBET will find in Dr ERSKINES judicious sermon, entitled, "Ministers of the Gospel cautioned against giving Offence;" and he will be so kind to himself as to make the commentary, and to draw the inference.

Thursday, August 31.—This short notice of Mr NISBETS letter will probably attract his attention. The time does not admit of any thing more formal. The protraction or delay of his elaborate performance till the close of the month is a tacit confession of its weakness, and of his apprehension of a proper reply. Mr SMELLIE, however, engages himself to the public to attempt, next month, to re-

vive Mr NISBETS letter; and he will do him the honour of bestowing on it a total refutation.

MR SMELLIES FINAL REJOINDER.

Edinburgh Magazine and Review, vol. iv. p. 555.

To the Reverend Mr CHARLES NISBET, *Minister of the Gospel at Montrose.*

SIR,

AFTER receiving so complete a refutation to your first letter, I never dreamed of your being mad enough to attempt a second. But you yielded, it seems, to the solicitation of your friends. False or ignorant must those friends be, who could counsel you to expose at once both your understanding and your heart. The charge is weighty; but it is not difficult to prove it to the conviction of all mankind. Your first contained many striking marks of disingenuity, and of a malicious resentment, unaccompanied with capacity. I was willing, however, to consider it as an unguarded effusion of rage, or as an effect of a

petulant vanity, which is apt to betray weak men into a notion of their own dignity and importance. But these apologetical phantoms are now vanished. You have uncovered your duplicity,—you have banished every favourable idea that your friends might wish to indulge,—you have put it out of the power of benevolence itself to palliate your baseness, or conceal your demerit. With much reluctance, therefore, I proceed to show you in your real character, by exhibiting a new series of falsehoods with which you have thought fit to disgrace your last epistle, the composing of which cost you and your friends so much agitation, anxiety, and trouble.

You deny me the honour of writing my own letter. This gives me no uneasiness, as the contrary is well known to many better men than Mr Nisbet. Such folly and baseness could only proceed from a man who is more hackneyed in the arts of deceit than I ever before had any conception of. If I could have had the meanness to have signed what was written by another person, I should consider myself to be ripening apace, and might entertain flattering ideas of acquiring in time those qualities which would entitle me to be

a companion in turpitude to the minister of Montrose.

You struggle hard, Sir, to wipe off the imputation of quoting Scripture ludicrously in the General Assembly. You say I gave no authority for such an insinuation. The only authority I had was your own. In your first letter are the following words:—"As I had formerly offended some *tender* consciences, and had been called *to order* for *quoting Scripture* in that house," &c. It was in this manner also you apologized in the Assembly for repeating passages from SHAKESPEARE. You asserted that you had been called to order for quoting Scripture in that house. This then is repeating your own authority: but you think it not worthy of credit, and I heartily agree with you. There is no blunder more common than the mistaking of imperfection for ability. Do you not seriously think yourself a capital orator? Is it not a common practice with you to collect jests, ludicrous scraps from poems, plays, &c. with a view to belch them out in the General Assembly, for the purpose of raising a laugh? Did you never perceive that the rabble laugh only at absurdities? It is wonderful that none of your

friends have had the virtue to inform you, that this conduct, in place of bringing you fame or respect, could only procure you the character of a reverend buffoon. But why this anxiety about trifles? You have been accused of deliberate *falsehoods*, and of quoting *dishonestly;* but crimes of this nature seem not to hurt you: if you can free yourself from the notion of *playing* with the Sacred Writings, you are perfectly unconcerned, not because you think this the worst species of wickedness, but because you know it might alarm the vulgar, who are not qualified to form a judgment of literary demerit.

Allow me now to collect a few passages from your last letter; and I will bet a thousand to one, that it is beyond the power of human credulity to believe a single word they contain. Here they are:—"What you say of my attributing the account of the Assembly to a *particular* gentleman is entirely your *own* imagination, as *I know not* who was the author of that account, and *so* could have no particular person in view." Again, "*I know none* of your gentlemen behind the curtain, and so cannot distinguish their productions." Further, "How the allusion to a story of a

modern critic could have given you such offence, or have been thought to point out a *particular* gentleman, unless *that* gentleman *is* conscious of guilt, I am *unable to imagine.*" Now, Sir, a few words for your ear; and, if you have not lost even the most distant idea of virtue, they must act as so many daggers in your heart. You tell a particular and circumstantial falsehood,—you narrate the forged action,—you fix the place and the fancied company,—you lay the scene at the door of a particular gentleman, whom you describe; and yet, after the calumny has been detected, you are not ashamed to deny that you had any *particular person* in view! This is truly shocking. In the most hardened sinner, it would be reckoned so base and unworthy as to fall below the standard of rectitude, even when estimated by thieves and highwaymen; —in a minister of CHRIST, it is horrid, and excites ideas of wretchedness, malice, and depravity, beyond the powers of expression. I go farther with you, Sir: I appeal to many of your acquaintances to whom you have repeatedly mentioned the gentlemans name you have chosen to calumniate. I appeal to those confidents who are in possession of your letters on this subject. In what a despicable

and dishonourable light must you appear to these men! Did you not rejoice when you learned that the application you *intended* was generally made? Blush, Sir, and discover that you have still some sense of decency and of moral obligation! Do you believe in the religion you teach? If you do, your pangs must be dreadful. I sincerely wish that the defect may be in your head, and not in that part which is principally valued by all *good men* and *sincere Christians*. But, if you have reason to be suspicious of the latter, consult GILPIN, and he will direct you to examine yourself, and to pray fervently for a speedy deliverance from the fascination and dominion of SATAN.

THE following remark,—"That after depriving me of every power of elocution, you immediately dress me up as a complete actor," is an astonishing instance of your bold and dishonest invention. I defy you to show the most distant allusion to such a sentiment in my whole letter. I made a remark of an opposite nature. I lamented that you should be enraged, merely because the structure of your windpipe did not qualify you to appear with advantage on the stage. It is easy to distin-

guish a mountebank from a GARRICK; and I could never fancy that a creature, whose only use could be to make an awkward figure in a procession, to drop a curtain, or to snuff candles, should be able to perform the parts of HAMLET or JAFFIER.

WHEN detected in false and ignominious observations, you have the meanness to say, you was only *jesting and in irony.* Is it a *jest* to charge a man with crimes of your own creating? Is it a *jest* to endeavour to hurt a man of business who never could offend you? Read the fable of the Boys and Frogs. Your *wit and irony* are indeed so flat and unmeaning, that you ought to imitate the painter who found it necessary to write the names below his figures; *e. g.* This is an *ass,*—and this a *baboon;* and when you fancy yourself to be superlatively clever, say, N. B. This is *wit*, and this *irony.* However, if falsehoods impertinent and detestable,—if assertions the most determined and frivolous,—if quotations the most dishonest, and the most obvious to detection, constitute wit, then may Mr NISBET be proclaimed the *wittiest* man in Europe.

But I hasten to an example which will doubtless attract the attention of your friends, and excite the indignation of all honest men. "The faults," says Mr Nisbet, "that disgrace your work are not of the typographical kind: they are much more important. Your *fulsome encomiums* on the blasphemous work of Abbé Resnal, and your *commendation* of Hawkesworthus obscenities, prove that *sceptics* and *infidels* have no small share of your charity," &c. These few lines contain no less than two manifest and deliberate breaches of truth; as the reader will perceive by turning to the reviews in question*. Having explained the plan of the Abbé Resnals Histoire Philosophique et Politique, &c. and, in concurrence with all Europe, commended the authors ideas concerning trade, manufactures, geography, natural productions, &c. the reviewer subjoins the following severe strictures against his notions of religion: "After," says the reviewer, "bestowing so large a portion of praise, the impartiality we have professed demands that we should also mention what we think worthy of *blame*. Our author is not without his *faults*. Perhaps he may be justly

* Edinburgh Mag. and Rev. Vol. I. p. 33. and p. 159.

charged with *impiety*. His attack upon Christianity is *vehement;* nor does he treat any other form of worship with *tenderness* or with *respect*. Since religion is the growth of every soil, and seems necessary to mankind, had it not been wiser to have bent or to have lopt off the *crooked* and *luxuriant* branches than thus to have laid the *ax to the root of the tree?*" How do you find yourself now, Mr NISBET? The invention of fifty more lies will not be sufficient to cover this one. If the reader chuses to consult the article appealed to, he will find the Abbé RESNAL heartily condemned for many other particulars beside that of irreligion.

As to what you call the *obscenities* of HAWKESWORTHS Voyages, they are *not* commended. A few particulars in the manners of the people of Otaheite are mentioned as facts fit for the speculation of philosophers; but by no means with a view to excite improper ideas. It would be equally absurd to stigmatize the writers on anatomy and midwifery as the most obscene authors of the age. But it would appear that Mr NISBETS taste is too gross to allow him to read the manners of women in different ages and nations with personal safety. I am amazed, however, that

Mr Nisbets avidity for blunders did not enable him to discover, in the review of Hawksworth, the word *morality* in place of *manners*. But the *efficacy* of *morals* appears not to be an article in his creed.

You next remark, that "your unworthy treatment of the Reverend Dr Henry and Mr Walker show that you are no friend to *good* men or *sincere* Christians. I cannot but think it an honour done me to suffer in so good company, and to be reviled by those who have reviled *such men as these*." Here you bring in names into your quarrel with which you had no business, and for which I am certain these gentlemen have no reason to thank you. It is placing them in an awkward position, when you hold them up as models of goodness, and as shining luminaries in Christianity. Real good men chuse not to be exhibited as public spectacles of virtue. Modesty, which is one great article in a worthy character, cannot bear such an insult; and if these gentlemen be really good men and sincere Christians, as I hope they are, I am certain they cannot, with propriety, have any communication with you, unless it be with the charitable view of bringing you back

to the paths of virtue and of truth. But perhaps you wished to derive to yourself a third share of their righteousness. You have much need of it; and I heartily wish it may do you a service.

"I CANNOT," you observe, "admit the story of the Highland Sergeant to be *true*." But what is become of ORLANDO FURIOSO? In your first letter, you asserted that the anecdote was stolen from that work. Now that this falsehood has likewise been detected, you double about, and affect to deny the genuineness of the anecdote itself. The story is good; whether true or fabulous merits not a serious investigation; and, at any rate, Mr NISBET knows nothing of the matter: he is only here observing his usual trick of denying or affirming, as best suits his sinister purposes, without the smallest regard to truth.

THE following syllogism you imagine to be a demonstration that I did not write my former letter: "You reproach me with having been bred in a printers shop; a sure proof that the letter was not *wrote* by a printer." It is a sure proof, if proof were necessary, of the very reverse. I regretted that a man

who knew the numberless accidents to which printing is liable should have been base enough to exhibit wrong or transposed types as marks of *ignorance* in an *author!*

The latter part of this paragraph is somewhat singular: "But how," says Mr Nisbet, "you should think it an indignity for one clergyman to be bred in a printing-house any more than for another to be *bred* in an *alehouse*, I am at a loss to imagine, and would propose it as a *problem* to the curious." The allusion to a clergyman *bred* in an *alehouse* is to me altogether incomprehensible. Your problem, however, has given rise to conjectures. In this city, it is generally supposed to mean the Reverend Dr Daniel M'Queen. But what phrenzy should have tempted you to insult that gentleman may be proposed as another *problem* to the curious.

As your letter grows more entertaining towards the conclusion, it encourages me to make the more use of your own words: "You call me *a spouter of plays* in the General Assembly; but your great learning hindered you from knowing that *St Paul*, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, and *Cicero*, in his

oration *pro* VATINIO, have quoted plays as well as *I did.* I can *bear* any *epithet* that applies to such *men as these.*" ST PAUL, CICERO, and Mr NISBET, minister of Montrose, is as *bizarre a conjunction* as could well be imagined! ST PAUL and CICERO, it would appear, Mr NISBET conceives to have been both Christian apostles. PAULS quotation from a play is a hackneyed remark. Mr FOOTE, when in this place, used it as an argument against a certain *sermon**; and Mr NISBET seems to think the argument solid! It is a trite observation, that little minds, who have nothing to recommend them to notice, perpetually endeavour to cover their own naughtiness or deformity under the shelter of superior merit. You first link yourself with two Presbyterian divines; now you buckle yourself to PAUL and CICERO, whom you chuse to call *spouters of plays*, in order to keep up an imaginary connection with yourself. Rise a little higher in your absurd associations, and you will soon find yourself at the very pinacle of blasphemy and distraction.

A LITTLE farther on, we meet with a fresh increase to the catalogue of your falsehoods.

* Preached some years ago in the New Church of Edinburgh.

"You likewise call those who would exalt church-authority in some cases above the rights of conscience, the *moderate* party; which is as complete *Irish* as when you tell us, in your last number, p. 403. of a *canoe appearing* to two persons *fast asleep* on the banks of lake Ontario." As to the different parties in the church, let them fight their own battles; but I must not lose sight of the *canoe*. The *Irishism*, Sir, is a fabrication of your own: For the justice of this charge, I appeal to the meanest of your parishioners. In the tale of the Indians*, which bears striking marks of the taste, judgment, and humanity of its author†, we are told that, after SIDNEY and MARANO had been exhausted with fatigue and agitation of mind, they fell asleep on the banks of a lake. The tale goes on in this manner:—"Calm and unruffled was their repose; they enjoyed the happy visions of innocence, and dreamed not of impending danger. The moon, in unrivalled glory, had now attained her meridian, when

* See Edinburgh Magazine and Review, vol. iv. p. 403 the individual page to which Mr NISBET refers when he makes the above infamous remark.

† Mr RICHARDSON Professor of Humanity in the University of Glasgow.

the intermitting noise of rowers came slowly along the lake. A canoe soon *appeared*; and the dipping oars, arising at intervals from the water, shone gleaming along the deep," &c.

Now, Sir, if you have a servant-maid or a cow-herd near you, desire them to read the above passage, and ask them to whom the canoe *appeared?* They will answer, with truth and simplicity, that it *appeared* to the *imagition* of the author, who all along describes events and objects as a *spectator.* Indeed it is impossible to compose a tale or romance in any other manner. The position and features of the persons asleep, the moon, the lake, the rowers, are all particularly described. Who saw these *appearances?* Not SIDNEY and MARANO surely, but the author of the tale. It is needless to be more explicit. It is painful to remark the *appearances* of atrocity and of guilt which this example of your dishonesty affords. I really begin to think that you cannot read, or that there is some unaccountable perversion in your understanding, which makes you conceive *right* to be *wrong*, and *truth* to be *falsehood.*

I NOW proceed to examine your political principles, which are not incurious. In Mr

LISTONS speech, given by the author of the Assembly proceedings, in the Magazine for July, p. 416. is the following remark : " The spirit of sectaries," says Mr LISTON, " is a dangerous spirit. It once overturned both church and state in these kingdoms. It is at this moment fomenting *rebellion* in our colonies, and it will ever have a tendency to *anarchy* and confusion." To this passage the author of the proceedings subjoins this note : " It is very remarkable, that the only *Wilkites* in this country are some of the *wild party*, both clergymen and laymen ; and that, during the rebellion in forty-five, the only *clergymen* in Scotland who were suspected of *Jacobitism* were two or three of *that party.*" In your last you meant to combat these facts ; but the following quotation will shew how beautifully you betray yourself and the party you wish to support. Take your own words ; for I will not imitate you in quoting dishonestly. " You say, that it is observable, that the only Wilkites among the clergy (I suppose you mean *friends* to *liberty* and the *constitution*) are a few of the wild party. You are doubly mistaken to my *knowledge*. They are neither *few*, nor wholly of *that party*, who wish well to liberty and the *faith of charters*. But you are quite sur-

prising when you tell us, that the only Jacobites of the clergy in the rebellion 1745 were of that party. THEY must be very wild principles indeed, that incline people at once to such opposites as Jacobitism and *liberty*, passive obedience and licentiousness. A philosoper must be diverted by so bizarre an appearance. If the principles of the Wilkites and Jacobites be the same, as you attribute them to the same persons, pray why is not *Mr Wilkes preferred* at court?"

HERE you not only admit the justness of Mr LISTONS remark, but you extend it to your party. "They are neither *few*," you say, "nor wholly of *that* party, who wish well to *liberty* and the *faith of charters*." Does not this plainly indicate that you and your friends are Wilkites, and favourers of the present *rebellion* in America? The writer of the proceedings never considered *Wilkites* and *Jacobites* to be synonimous terms, any farther than as they *both* mean *enemies* to the present government; and, from your own account of your principles, and those of your party, it would appear that they lead to *rebellion*, whatever form or *name* it may assume! Have you read the late proclamation? and do you

comprehend its full force? The publication of treasonable sentiments is somewhat dangerous. I imagined that the many flagrant instances of duplicity in which you have been detected, might perhaps have recommended you to the attention of your presbytery. I am now alarmed, lest the first foolish controversy I ever was engaged in, should have the disagreeable effect of bringing a man to an *untimely end.* But you have more reason to hope from the moderation of His Majestys Advocate, than you could expect from his vigilance and his discernment. Matters of this nature may be overlooked; but they pass not, therefore, unnoticed. There is a current report in town, that a certain reverend Doctor of your party, has lately had one of his private letters, to another reverend Doctor in America, returned from the Secretary of States Office, with a rebuke for a first fault, but with a caveat to beware for the future of encouraging and enforcing rebellious principles. If you persist in your opinions, it will be prudent in you to leave Montrose, and to transport yourself to America *, where you may bellow in safety

* Mr Nisbet, as formerly mentioned, did, according to this advice, transport himself to America.

sedition and obstinacy into the ears of a deluded people.

I HAVE now travelled over your memorable system of falsehoods, absurdities, and seditious principles. Besides these, your readers must doubtless have observed a beautiful air of pedantry and hypocrisy spread over the whole. In the following scrap of Latin, your modesty is conspicuous. '*Desine* BONOS *petulantissima lingua consectari.*' Your publications have discovered you to have no claim to the character of a *good*, or even of an *honest* critic. You may still, however, have some distant hope of *becoming* a good man. But, if you continue to write any more in the same strain, you will in time eradicate every principle of virtue which nature may have forced into your heart. You affect to regret that you should have "lost some pages of *St Augustine*," while you were animadverting on my last letter. Pious soul! how does your devotion allow you leisure to invent and publish *lies*?

You complain that I used you scurrilously and virulently. If truth be to you scurrility, and just reproof, virulence; then was

my last truly scurrilous and virulent. In one part of your letter, you say, that, in your first, you imitated the language and manner of the reviewers; in another, you tell us, that you would be ashamed to use their language, 'unless in *irony*, or to themselves.' Upon these topics you may make yourself perfectly easy. Your publications have already convinced every man of taste and judgment, that it exceeds the limits of your talents to imitate any writer superior to those of Mother Gooses Tales, or Satans Invisible World.

It is with real pain that I thus expose you to the world; but, after what you have written, no person of candour can say that I am to blame. If your behaviour had been nothing worse than weak and indecent, I would have withheld my correction. For, in a character, of which wisdom was never suspected to be a part, it is not surprising to find follies and absurdities; and of these the proper punishment is contempt and silence. But, when you presumed, Sir, to burst through the decorum of private life,—when, in the wild excesses of your rage, you forgot both truth and justice, it was necessary that

I should speak. I feel sufficiently the awkwardness of my situation, and am truly ashamed of the imbecillity of my opponent. But I feel also what I owe to truth, and to my friends; and, while I despise the insignificance of your composition, and the frivolousness of your intellect, I cannot help thinking, that disingenuities require to be laid open, and falsehoods to be detected. The perplexity into which you have thrown yourself is dreadful. To save your heart, your real and sincere friends, if any such you have, will, I doubt not, be ready to give up your understanding; and, if it affected not your subsistence and support, would be even forward to pronounce, that your brain is not sound. My expression, Sir, is ardent; but I appeal to your letters if it is not proper. The evidence on which I rest is as uncommon as it is convincing. My vouchers are forcible, circumstantial, and to the point. What will be your private reflections upon the matter, I know not. My humanity makes me wish they may lead you to repentance. I cannot, however, prevent your persevering in your demerit. You have heard from me twice. Beware of provoking a third letter.

October 1. WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Both as the prime mover and principal conductor of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, and as a literary character of much genius and reputation, long and intimately connected with Mr Smellie, some more particular notice of Dr Gilbert Stuart seems called for in these Memoirs, besides the incidental circumstances which have occurred in the account already given of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review: And to the following biographical sketch, several letters to and from that eminently learned author are subjoined, under the impression that every thing respecting him will probably be perused with considerable interest.

Dr Gilbert Stuart, L. L. D. was a person of eminent genius, extensive learning, and great literary powers, but of ill regulated conduct. His father, Mr George Stuart, a profound classical scholar, was long Professor of Humanity and Roman Antiquities in the University of Edinburgh. Dr Stuart was born at Edinburgh in 1742, in which city he received a complete classical and literary education, under the superintending care of his learned father. When little more than twenty years of age, he

wrote a dissertation concerning the antiquity of the British constitution, for which he was complimented with the diploma of Doctor of Laws. While engaged in some of his studies and projected publications, he has been known to confine himself for many weeks to solitary literary labour, hardly ever stirring abroad for air and exercise; but he unfortunately indulged in occasional sallies of vastly too great latitude and even licentiousness.

Having turned the best of his studies to the law, he became a candidate for one of the law chairs in the University of Edinburgh which happened to fall vacant; and being diappointed, as is said through the proper interference of the late celebrated Dr Robertson, then Principal of the University, who is reported to have objected to the dissipation of his habits, as rendering him unfit to be entrusted with the instruction of youth. Instead of improving the deserved chastisement which he had experienced on this occasion, as a useful lesson, that he might amend his evil habits, and reform his own misconduct, the real cause of losing the situation on which he had anxiously fixed his hopes of celebrity, and which his genius

and attainments were admirably calculated for filling with reputation to himself and advantage to the University, his eager and irascible temperament of mind became filled with indignant and unconquerable hatred of the person whom he believed to have been the cause of his well merited rejection.

In consequence of this deep-rooted enmity, which he cherished with rancarous keenness during the whole remainder of his life, Dr Stuart prostituted his great talents in the composition of two historical works, otherwise of distinguished merit, which consist in a great measure of violent invectives against corresponding publications by Principal Robertson. The work entitled a View of Society in Europe, by Dr Stuart, is in obvious contradiction to the excellent luminous Introduction to the admirable History of the Emperor Charles V. by Dr Robertson: And Dr Stuarts History of Scotland, from the Reformation to the death of Queen Mary, is an undisguised and virulent hypercritical attack on the History of Scotland by the same illustrious author.

On his disappointment of the Professorship, Dr Stuart went to London, where he was sometime employed as a writer in the Monthly Review. But of the share which he took in that long established and respectable literary journal, of his other literary labours at that time in the metropolis, or of his general habits at that period, we have no information. In 1773, he returned to Edinburgh, where he set on foot the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, of which an account has already been given. During the subsistence of that periodical work, Dr Stuart mostly resided with his father at Musselburgh; where he often devoted himself to seclusion, employed in intense application to study: But occasionally indulged in fits of extreme dissipation, which ultimately undermined his constitution, and hurried him to a premature grave.

In the course of one of his rambles, during the publication of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, Dr Stuart came one evening to the house of Mr Smellie in a state of complete intoxication, and was immediately put to bed. Awakening in the course of the night, he conceived himself in a bro-

thel, and alarmed the family by repeatedly vociferating *house ! house!* Mr SMELLIE came as soon as possible to the bedside of his friend, to learn what he wanted, and endeavoured to persuade him to go quietly again to sleep. On seeing Mr SMELLIE almost naked, and still impressed with the idea of being in a house of bad fame, he addressed Mr SMELLIE with great emphasis in nearly the following words : " SMELLIE ! I never expected to find you in such a house. Get on your clothes, and return immediately to your wife and family ; and be assured I shall never mention this affair to any one."

ON another ramble of dissipation, Dr STUART is said to have taken several days to travel on foot between the Cross of Edinburgh and Musselburgh, a distance of only six miles ; stopping at every public-house by the way in which good ale could be found, of which he was remarkably fond. In this strange expedition he was accompanied part of the way by several boon companions, who were fascinated beyond their ordinary excesses by his great powers of wit and hilarity in conversation ; but who gradually fell off at various stages of the slow progression. The

last of these companions began his return towards Edinburgh from the Magdalane Bridge, within a mile of Musselburgh; but oppressed by the fumes of the ale, which he had too long and liberally indulged in, he staggered in the middle of the night into the ash-pit of a great steam engine which then stood by the road-side, and fell into a profound sleep. On awakening before day, he observed the mouth of an immense fiery furnace open, several figures all grim with soot and ashes were stirring the fire, ranging the bars of the enormous grate, and throwing on more fuel, while the terrible clanking of the chains and beams of the machinery above, impressed his still confused imagination with an idea that he was in *hell*. Horror-struck at the frightful idea, he is said to have exclaimed, "Good God! is it come to this at last!"

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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